

How To Improve The ROI Of Personalization At Scale In The Era Of AI

Boost Personalization Initiatives With More Relevant And Valuable Customer Moments

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Executive Summary

For many organizations, increased investment and focus on scaling personalization strategies over the past few years means they have more capabilities and resources than ever before to create personalized moments for their customers. But not every moment is the right moment to personalize an interaction. To exceed customer expectations, organizations need to sharpen their focus on when and where to personalize moments, with customers leading the way.

In January 2025, Adobe commissioned Forrester Consulting to evaluate how buyer sentiment toward personalization has shifted and how organization's strategies have changed since its last commissioned study on personalization in June 2022, "Personalization At Scale: Bring Forth The Customer Benefits Of Experience Excellence." Forrester refreshed this global study by conducting two online surveys: the first with 1,181 buyers (589 consumers and 592 B2B buyers) and the second with 647 personalization decision-makers.

We found that buyers want to experience personalized moments that deliver relevance and value, not those designed to help stimulate sales for the organization they are interacting with. To understand how these buyer expectations are being met, we evaluated decision-makers on their organization's ability to practice "personalization at scale" — bringing together content, data, and decisioning for each customer experience. Respondents at the most advanced organizations — those that have mastered the ability to deliver the right personalized experiences at the right moments — were identified as "Experience Leaders". They were significantly more likely to exceed ROI expectations for their personalization programs compared to less mature peers.

Key Findings

Personalization strategies aren't consistently delivering on buyer expectations. Nearly three-quarters of buyers expected organizations to understand when, where, and how they want personalized interactions. Yet, just half of decision-makers said fully understanding customer context was important for their organization's personalization efforts.

Personalization at scale requires better, not just more, personalized experiences. Organizations have improved their personalization capabilities since our 2022 study and most now practice some version of personalization at scale. Despite these advancements, buyers reported no changes in organizations' abilities to personalize interactions.

Experience Leaders use personalization capabilities to create relevant and valuable customer moments. They use data to understand what to create then develop content and leverage advanced decisioning to let customers drive their own personalized journeys. Experience Leaders are also at the forefront of using AI to help supercharge their capabilities for delivering the moments customers want.

Experience Leaders see improved ROI from personalization initiatives. Compared to their less mature peers, these leaders could justify long-term costs; assess personalization program ROI; and were more likely to exceed cumulative lift expectations for cost savings, revenue, customer lifetime value, and conversion rates. Most experienced three-year cumulative lifts of 20% or more.

Personalization Strategies Aren't Consistently Delivering On Buyer Expectations

In surveying consumers, B2B buyers, and personalization strategy decision-makers we found that:

- **Buyers want personalized interactions on their terms — and their expectations are rising.** Nearly three-quarters of consumers and B2B buyers expected the organizations they engage with to understand when, where, and how they want to receive personalized interactions. This includes understanding when personalized interactions aren't necessary and what level of personalization to provide at each stage of their buying journey (see Figure 1). These audiences form their expectations based on real interactions with other organizations that deliver exceptional personalized experiences.

FIGURE 1

CONSUMERS/B2B BUYERS

Buyer Sentiment Toward Personalized Interactions

(Showing “Agree” or “Strongly agree”)

● Consumers

● B2B buyers

71%

71%

A personalized experience is one in which companies understand when, where, and how I want personalized interactions.

75%

63%

Not all interactions with a company should be personalized.

66%

66%

Being delighted by interactions with companies does not mean they have to be personalized experiences.

72%

67%

Personalization means different things at different points in the buying journey.

Base: 1,181 respondents; 592 B2B buyers and 589 consumers

Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 B2B Buyer and Consumer Personalization Survey [E-61927]

- **Most buyers are unsatisfied with the personalized interactions they experience.** Buyers seek relevant moments from the organizations they interact with that allow them to realize value across four dimensions: functional (i.e., usefulness), economic (i.e., money), experiential (i.e., interactions and sensations), and symbolic (i.e., meaning).¹ However, our study found that buyers are not convinced organizations understand when they want personalized interactions, how they want to receive them, and which are the most relevant (see Figure 2). Furthermore, many buyers described some interactions as invasive, unnecessary, creepy, out of touch, and inappropriate.

FIGURE 2 CONSUMERS/B2B BUYERS

Buyer Sentiment Toward What Organizations Are Getting Wrong With Personalization

(Showing “Agree” or “Strongly agree”)

● Consumers ● B2B buyers

Companies do not understand when I value personalized interactions and when I do not want them.

62%

53%

Companies do not understand my interaction preferences (i.e., when, where, and how to interact with me).

52%

53%

Companies are not prioritizing the interactions in which I would see the most value from personalized experiences.

49%

55%

Base: 1,181 respondents; 592 B2B buyers and 589 consumers

Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 B2B Buyer and Consumer Personalization Survey [E-61927]

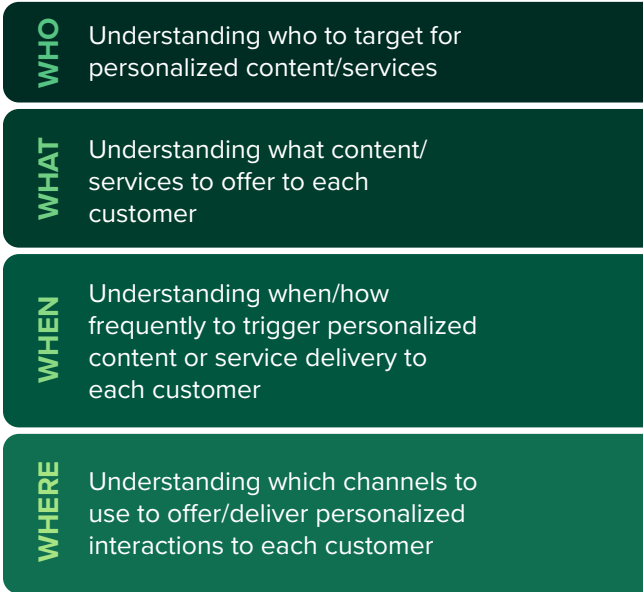
- **Many organizations' personalization goals do not foster customer relevance and value.** Organizations are too focused on personalization tactics that make the most sense for their business (e.g., how they can

best stimulate sales) versus the tactics that would address customer needs and context. Just 51% of decision-makers reported that fully understanding customer context is important or critical for their organization’s personalization strategies (i.e., understanding what customers to target, what content/services to offer, when/how frequently to trigger personalized content/services, and on which channels to offer/deliver personalized interactions) (see Figure 3).

- **Organizations plan to continue increasing their investment in personalization.** Eighty percent of decision-makers indicated their organization plans to continue increasing internal and external investment in its personalization strategies by 10% or more over the next two years, representing a similar increase versus the last two years (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 3

Elements Of Customer Context Used For Personalization Strategies



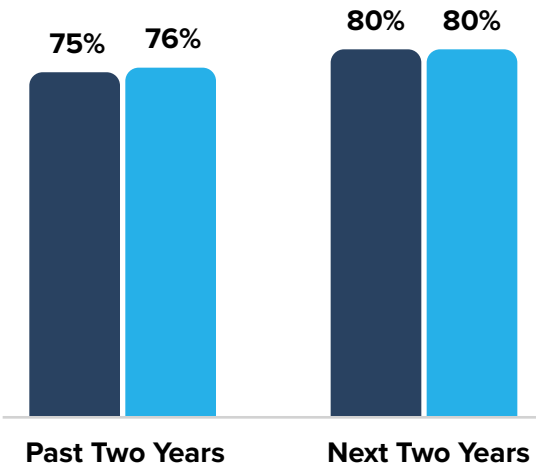
Source: Forrester’s Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

FIGURE 4 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Personalization Strategy Investment Increases Of 10% Or More

(Showing “Increase by 10% or more”)

- Internal investment in personalization strategy (e.g., internal resource costs)
- External investment in personalization strategy (e.g., software vendors, ad agencies)



Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations
Source: Forrester’s Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

Personalization At Scale Requires Better, Not Just More, Personalized Experiences

To understand how organizations' personalization capabilities have advanced over the last three years, we used the same "personalization at scale" model from the 2022 study. We defined "personalization at scale" as the ability to bring together content, data, and decisioning for each customer experience. Our model assessed respondents' organizations against six different pillars of personalization capabilities and grouped them into three levels of maturity: Experience Leaders, Evolving Intermediates, and Rising Laggards (see Figure 5).

FIGURE 5 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Personalization At Scale Maturity

Respondents were divided into three groups based on their current abilities along six personalization dimensions:

- 1** An enterprisewide program approach
- 2** The personalization tactics used
- 3** The types of data used
- 4** Adoption of customer data management/analytics practices
- 5** Adoption of content creation practices
- 6** Adoption of omnichannel journey orchestration practices



- **12%** Experience Leader
- **70%** Evolving Intermediate
- **18%** Rising Laggard

Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations; 79 Experience Leaders, 450 Evolving Intermediates, and 118 Rising Laggards
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

In 2025, we found that personalization strategies have matured considerably over the past three years. Personalization at scale has evolved from an advanced capability executed by only the most mature firms to a table-stakes capability most organizations are practicing today. According to our results, there are several factors driving this advancement, including:

- **Cross-functional C-level support for personalization is increasing.**

In 2025, 83% of respondents reported their organizations had C-level support for personalization strategies, compared to just 70% who reported the same in 2022 (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 6 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Organizations' Most Senior Sponsor Of Personalization Programs



Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations

Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

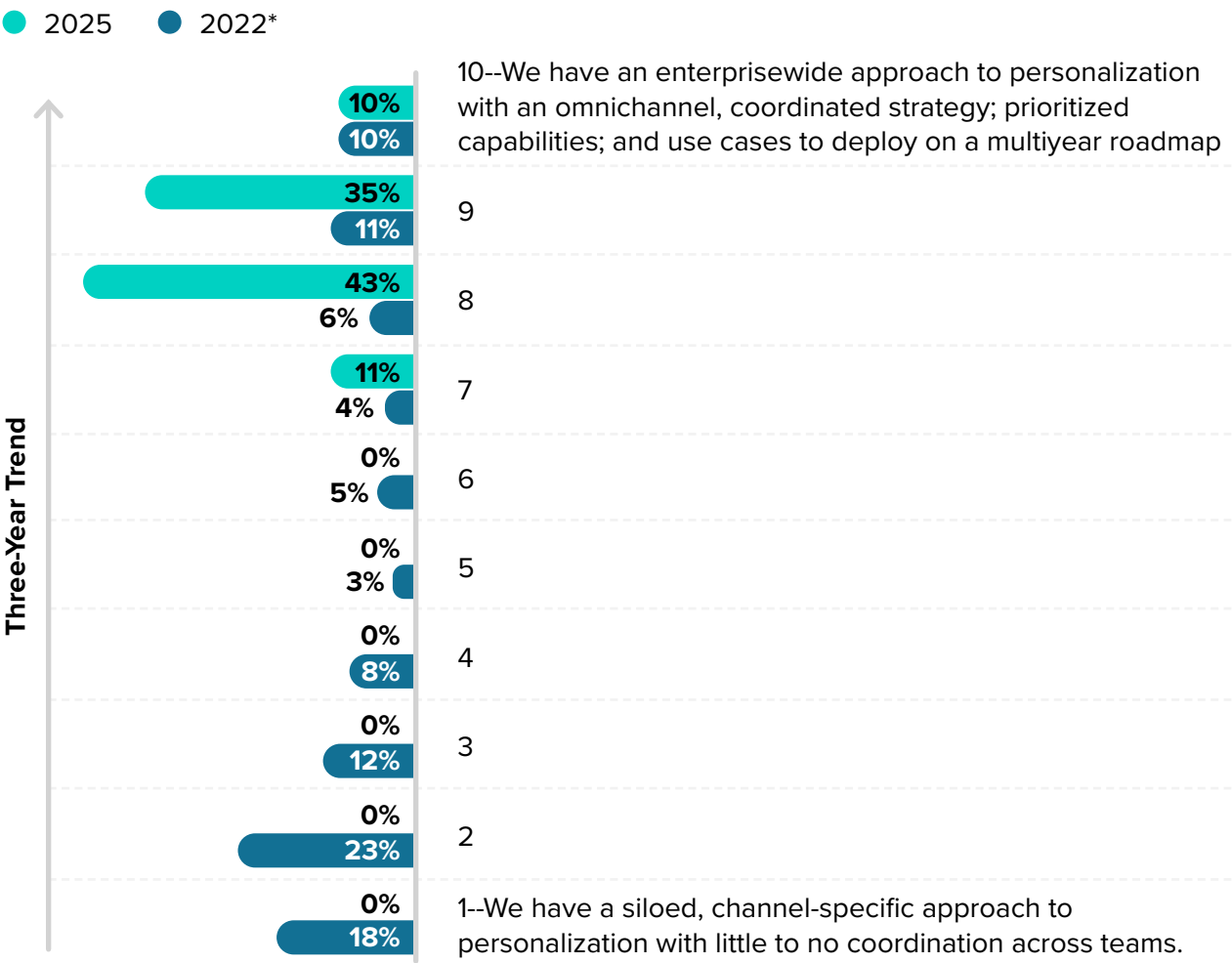
*Base: 1,770 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations

*Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Adobe, June 2022

- **Organizations are twice as likely to have an enterprisewide approach to personalization strategies.** On a scale from one (siloes, channel-specific approach) to 10 (enterprisewide approach), 45% of respondents selected nine or 10 versus just 21% who selected the same in 2022 (see Figure 7).

FIGURE 7 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Organizations' Approach To Personalization Strategies

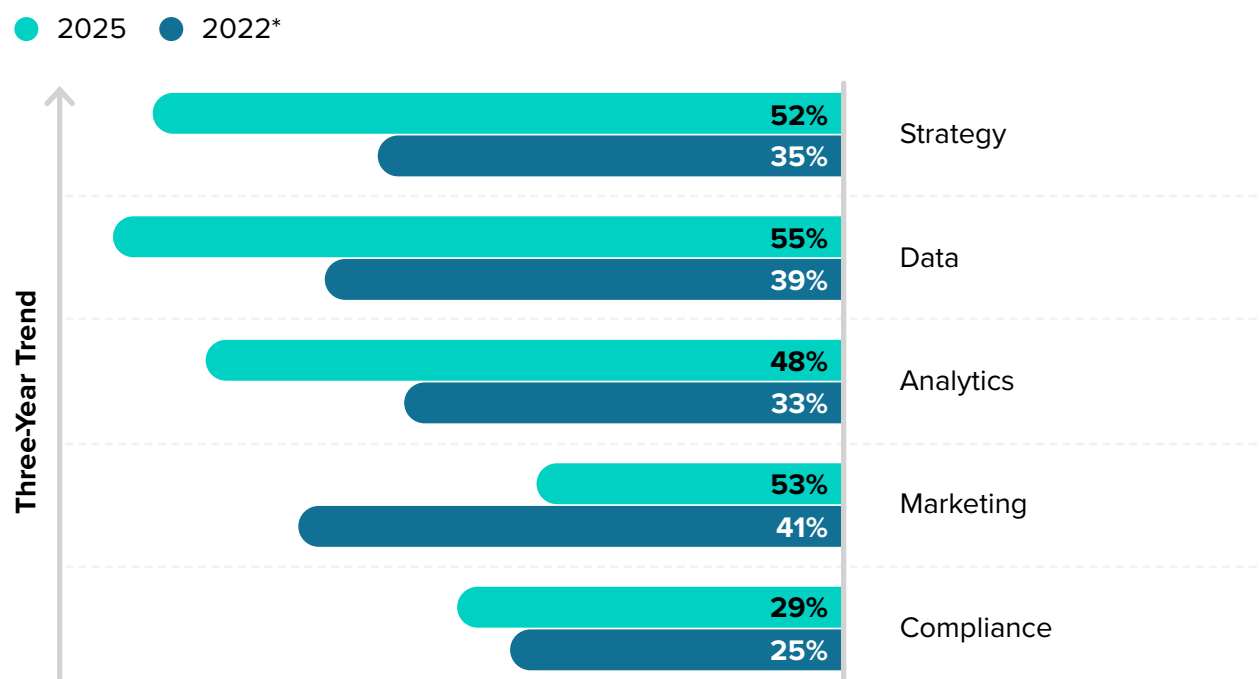


Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]
*Base: 1,770 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations
*Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Adobe, June 2022

- **Personalization is increasingly a strategic initiative.** Eighty-seven percent of respondents reported that their organizations consider personalization programs a coordinated effort with a dedicated center of excellence versus 79% in 2022. Decision-makers have also strategically optimized their dedicated personalization skill sets, with significant additions to strategy, data, analytics, marketing, and compliance compared with 2022 results (see Figure 8).

FIGURE 8 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Organizations' Dedicated Personalization Skill Sets



Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations

Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

*Base: 1,770 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations

*Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Adobe, June 2022

- **Organizations are using more zero-party data for personalization.**

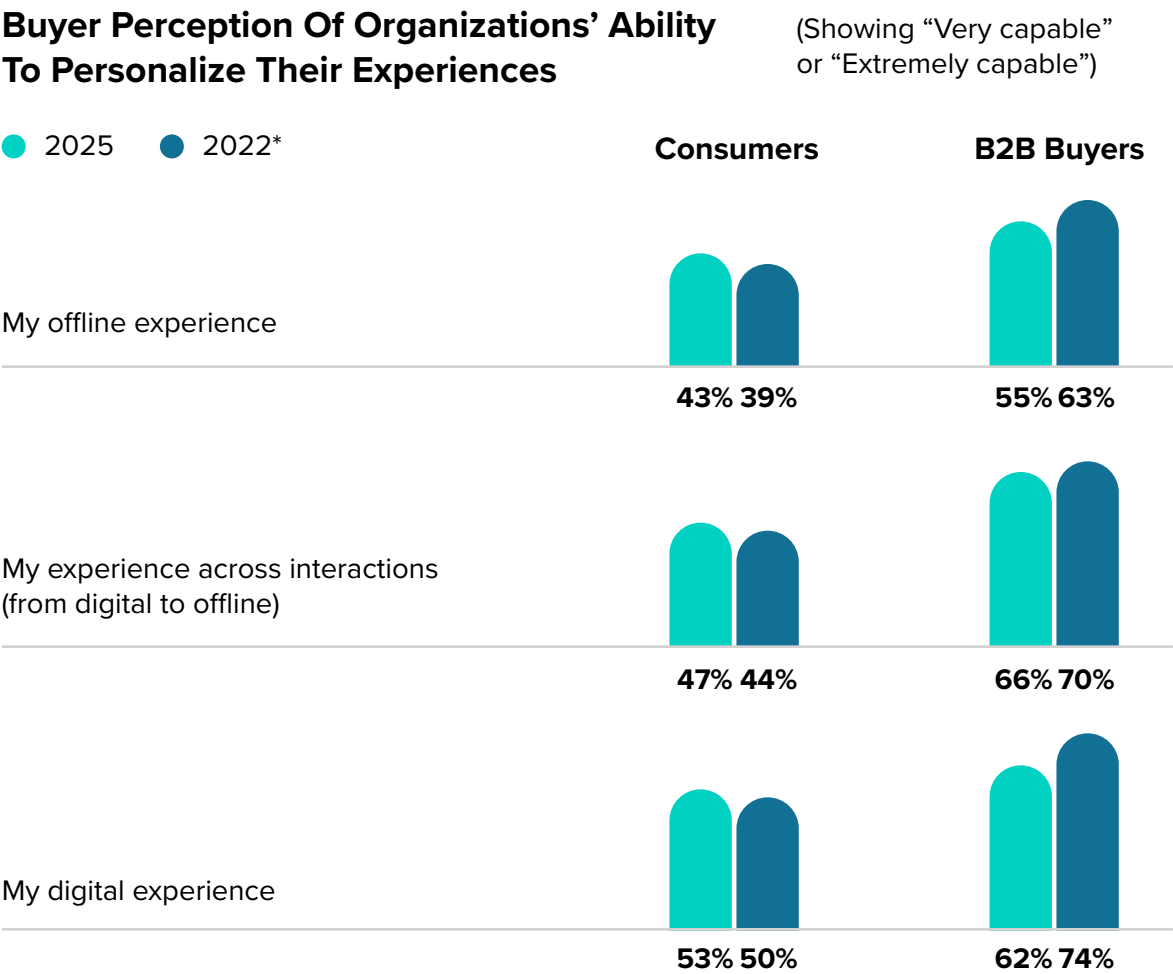
Nearly half (46%) of respondents reported their organization uses zero-party data (i.e., data that their customers proactively and intentionally share about themselves) to help deliver personalized interactions versus just 38% in 2022. Organizations are turning to zero-party data to mitigate the impact of data deprecation on customer data. Zero-party data is critical for tailoring personalization strategies to customer needs and expectations.²

- **Organizations are personalizing a greater variety of touchpoints.**

Respondents reported that the average number of online and offline personalized touchpoints their organization uses increased from five in 2022 to seven in 2025.

While most respondents’ organizations showed significant advancements in personalization capabilities, they must not become complacent. And, although they can personalize virtually any customer moment, it doesn’t mean they should. In fact, despite advancements in personalization capabilities, buyers did not report seeing a positive change in organizations’ ability to personalize their interactions since our 2022 study (see Figure 9). Organizations must prioritize using personalization at scale to deliver quality over quantity, ensuring greater relevance and value for their customers.

FIGURE 9 CONSUMERS/B2B BUYERS



Base: 1,181 respondents; 592 B2B buyers and 589 consumers
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 B2B Buyer and Consumer Personalization Survey [E-61927]
*Base: 1,230 B2B buyers and 1,921 consumers who have recently engaged with a company via a digital channel
*Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Adobe, June 2022

Experience Leaders Use Personalization At Scale To Serve Customers And Drive Business Benefits

Experience Leaders understand that just because they can potentially personalize any moment, it doesn't mean they should. They successfully employ personalization at scale investments to deliver tailored moments when, where, and how their customers prefer by focusing on three overarching capabilities:

1. Using customer data to identify personalized moments to create for each customer.
2. Creating content to support customers' experience orchestration.
3. Using decisioning to enable customers to drive their own personalized journeys.

EXPERIENCE LEADERS DELIVER BETTER PERFORMANCE FOR THEIR ORGANIZATIONS

By using personalization capabilities to deliver the moments their customers want, Experience Leaders achieve significantly higher ROI from these efforts than their less mature peers. We found that Experience Leaders:

- **Can justify the long-term costs and demonstrate ROI of personalization.** Fewer Experience Leaders faced challenges justifying the long-term costs and assessing personalization at scale program ROI in 2025 compared to 2022. The opposite was true for Rising Laggards: More struggled to demonstrate ROI and justify long-term costs in 2025 (see Figure 10).

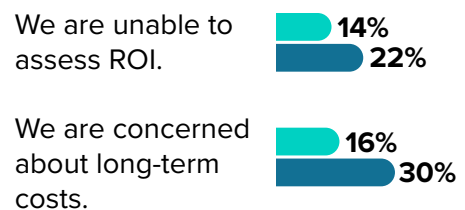
FIGURE 10

PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

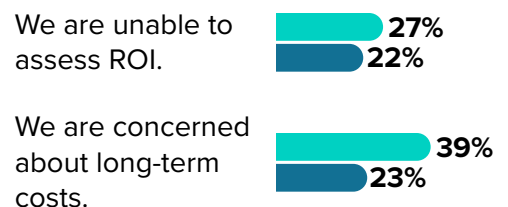
Organizations' Challenges With Implementing/Expanding Personalization At Scale

● 2025 ● 2022*

Experience Leaders



Rising Laggards



Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations

Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

*Base: 1,770 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations

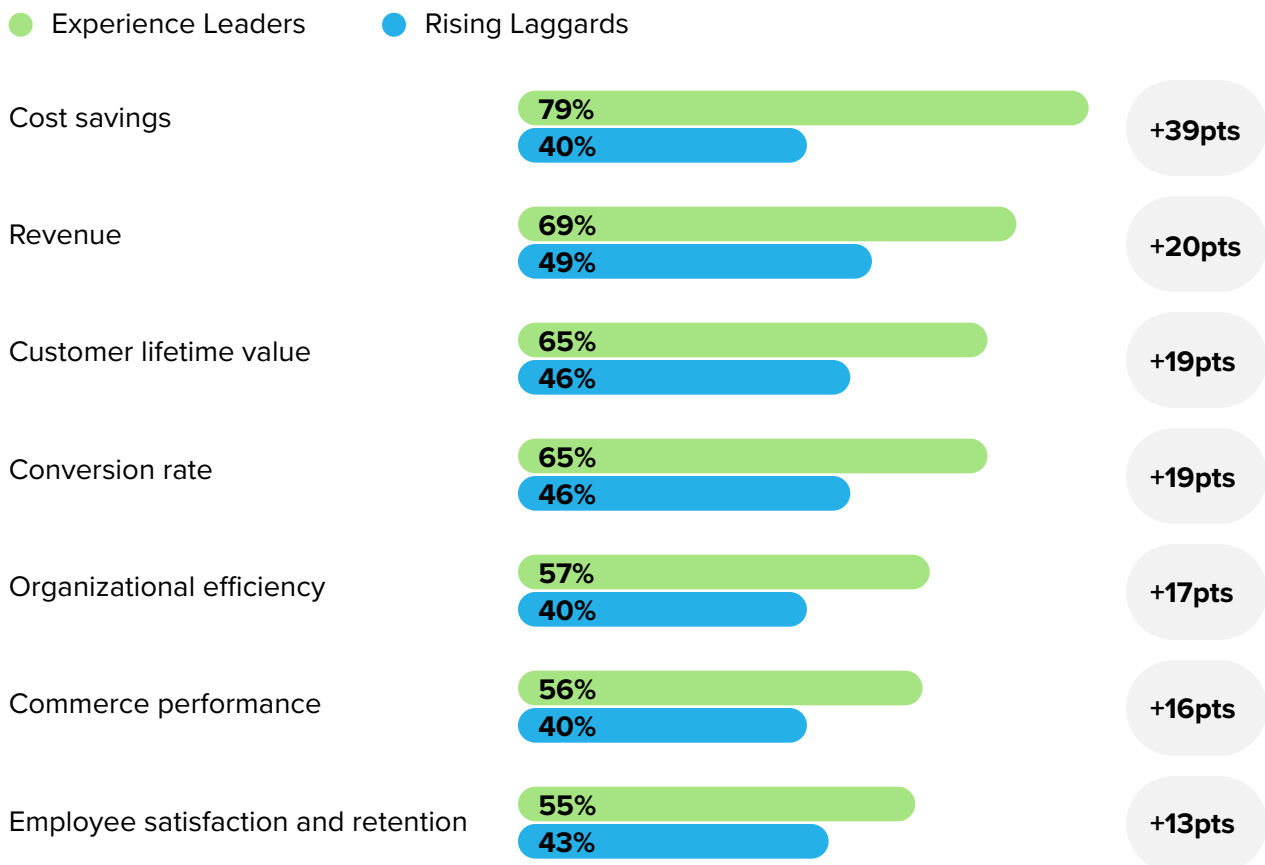
*Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Adobe, June 2022

- **Significantly exceed personalization performance expectations.**
Compared to Rising Laggards, Experience Leaders were twice as likely to exceed cumulative lift expectations in cost savings (+39 percentage points) and were also significantly more likely to beat expectations in revenue (+20 percentage points), customer lifetime value (+19 percentage points), and conversion rates (+19 percentage points) (see Figure 11).

FIGURE 11 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Organizations' Cumulative Lift Performance From Personalization At Scale Programs

(Showing “Higher than expectations” or “Significantly higher than expectations”)



Base: 67-69 Experience Leaders and 87 Rising Laggards at organizations who have implemented personalization at scale programs that are experiencing a cumulative lift of 5% or more for each metric shown

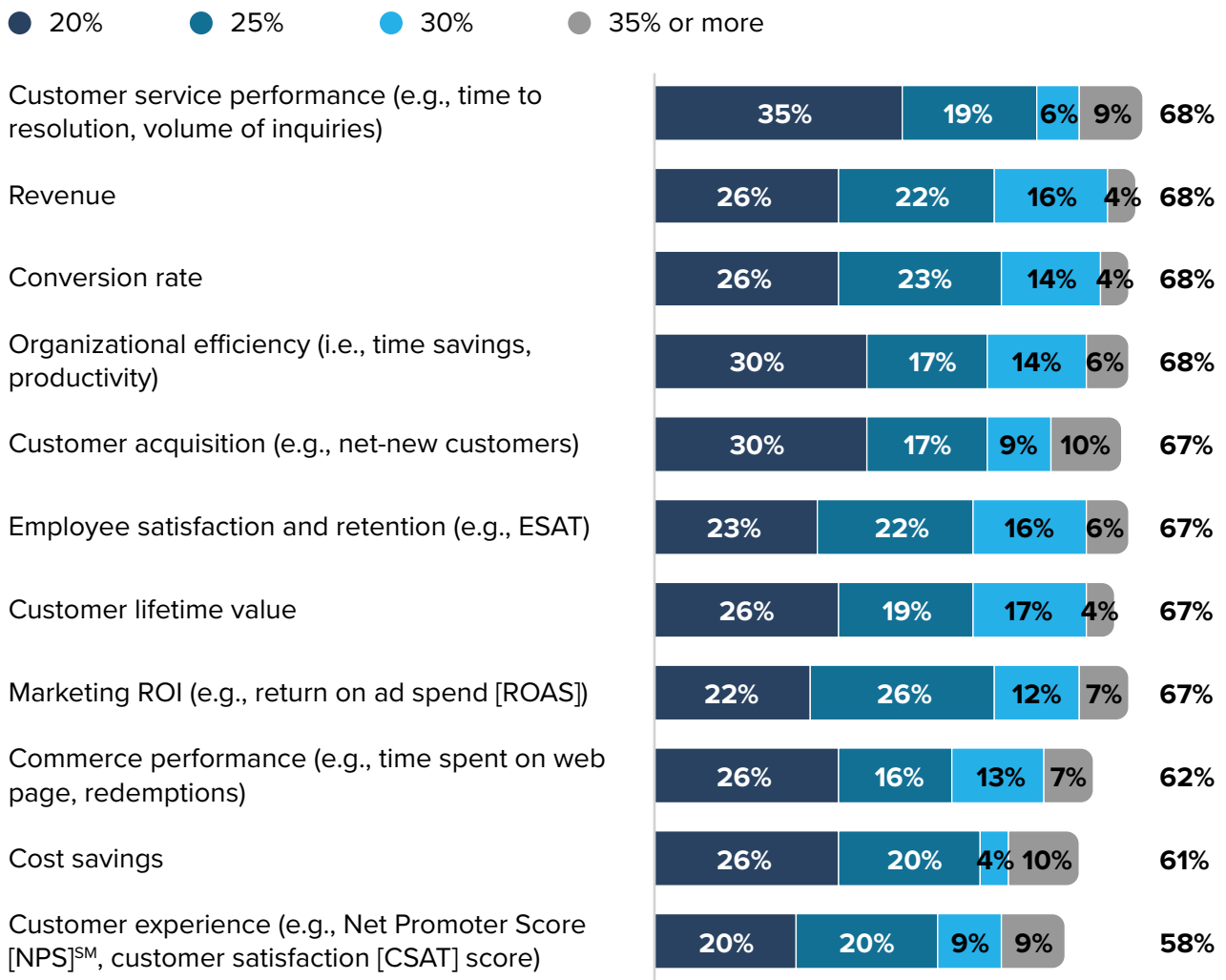
Note: Showing metrics with significant differences between Experience Leaders and Rising Laggards

Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

- **Boost customer and operational KPIs over a three-year period.**
The majority of Experience Leaders saw a cumulative lift of 20% or higher across customer and operational metrics. Metrics where the most Experience Leaders reported this lift included customer service performance, revenue, conversion rates, and organizational efficiency (see Figure 12).

FIGURE 12 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Cumulative Lift Achieved By Experience Leaders From Personalization At Scale Programs Over The Last Three Years



Base: 69 Experience Leaders at organizations who have implemented personalization at scale programs
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

Experience Leaders Use Data To Identify The Best Personalized Moments For Each Customer

Effectively using data to identify the best personalized moment for each customer not only improves their experience with an organization but also increases their willingness to share data in return. We found that:

- **Buyers are wary about sharing their data.**
Just 8% of consumers and 21% of B2B buyers are always fine with sharing their personal information. Fifty-seven percent of consumers and 50% of B2B buyers would prefer to remain anonymous across all interactions.
- **Buyers are nearly twice as likely to share data with an organization if they can experience the personalized interactions they want.**
The majority of consumers and B2B buyers indicated they would be more willing to share data if it enabled organizations to personalize their interactions more effectively, or if it meant they would receive more value in return (see Figure 13). To underscore this sentiment, just 23% of consumers and 27% of B2B buyers reported they would be willing to share personal information to get more relevant ads. However, 43% of consumers would share personal information for specific product or service recommendations, and 46% of B2B buyers would share information for value-added experiences such as educational content related to their purchases or goals.

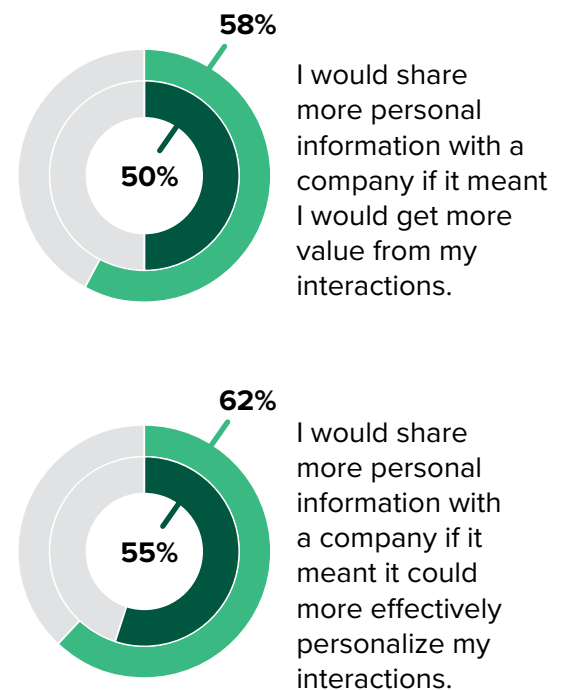
FIGURE 13

CONSUMERS/B2B BUYERS

Buyer Willingness To Share Data

(Showing “Agree” or “Strongly agree”)

- B2B buyers
- Consumers



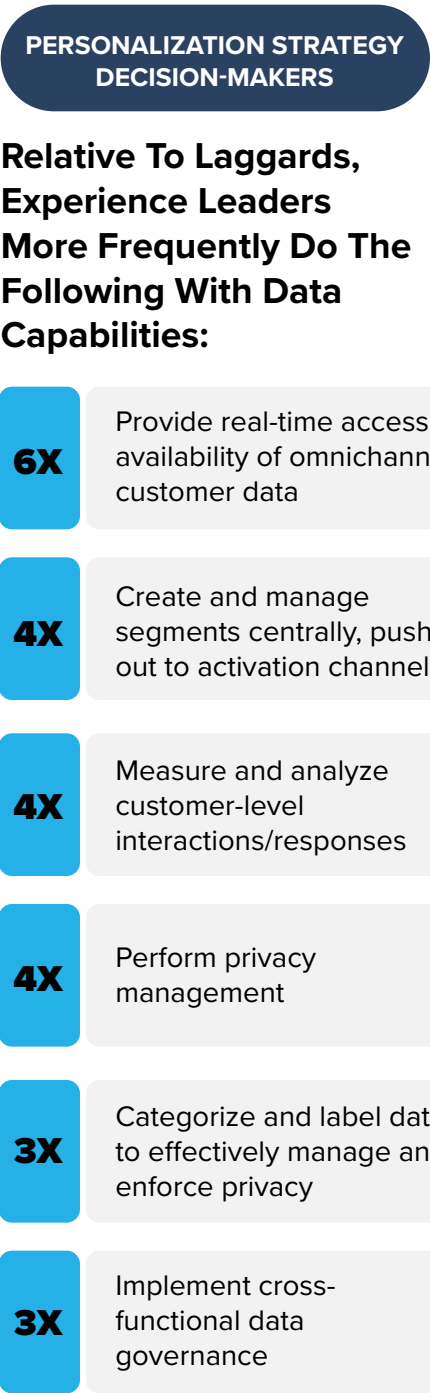
Base: 1,181 respondents; 592 B2B buyers and 589 consumers
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 B2B Buyer and Consumer Personalization Survey [E-61927]

EXPERIENCE LEADERS ARE BETTER AT COLLECTING AND USING CUSTOMER DATA TO INFORM PERSONALIZATION TACTICS

Experience Leaders’ organizations use their customer data capabilities to deliver personalized moments of relevance and value to their customers. In doing so, they have convinced their customers that sharing more data is advantageous. We found that Experience Leaders:

- Are better able to cope with data deprecation.** According to Forrester’s 2024 Marketing Survey, nearly half (45%) of surveyed B2C marketing decision-makers said it would be difficult to understand the behaviors, attitudes, motivations, and context of their high-priority customers and prospects over the next 12 months.³ Zero-party data and contextual signals can help combat data deprecation by capturing data on customers and their context to inform personalization efforts. Experience Leaders were two times more likely to incorporate zero-party data and real-time contextual signal data (e.g., geofenced triggers, in-session website behaviors, dialog inputs) into their personalization programs.
- Have more advanced data capabilities for managing personalization tactics.** Experience Leaders were six times more likely to provide real-time accessibility of omnichannel customer data and four times more likely to create and manage data segments centrally, measure and analyze customer-level interactions/responses, and perform customer data privacy management. They also were three times more likely to categorize and label data effectively to manage and enforce privacy and implement a cross-functional data governance structure (see Figure 14).

FIGURE 14



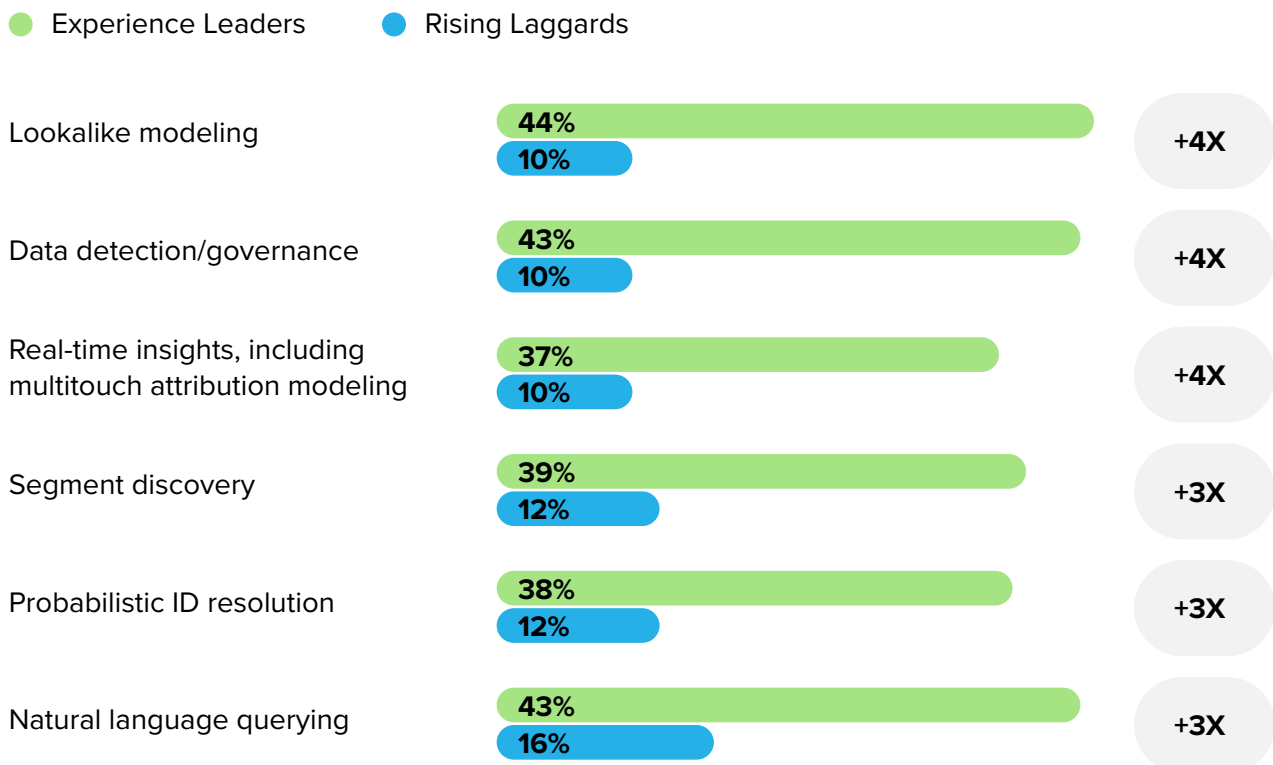
Base: 197 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations; 79 Experience Leaders and 118 Rising Laggards
Source: Forrester’s Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

- **Leverage AI/ML tools to understand who their customers are and what personalized interactions they want.** Experience Leaders were four times more likely to use AI/ML capabilities for lookalike modeling, data detection/governance, and real-time insights, including multitouch attribution modeling. They were also three times more likely to use these capabilities for segment discovery (i.e., identification of new customer groups), natural language querying (i.e., interacting with datasets using everyday language versus query language), and probabilistic ID resolution (i.e., using generative AI (genAI) algorithms to identify customer profiles based on probabilities) (see Figure 15).

FIGURE 15 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

AI/ML Data Capabilities That Organizations Use Today

(Showing “We currently do this and are expanding our implementation”)



Base: 197 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations; 79 Experience Leaders and 118 Rising Laggards

Note: Showing top responses related to AI/ML data capabilities

Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

Experience Leaders Use Content Creation To Support Customer Experiences

What good is understanding what personalized moments your customers want if you can't create the content to deliver them? Content creation capabilities are vital because organizations can't create personalized moments without content. To create personalized moments, organizations must understand the consumer or B2B buyer (i.e., "who"), the content (i.e., "what"), the touchpoint (i.e., "where"), and the trigger (i.e., "when").⁴ We found that:

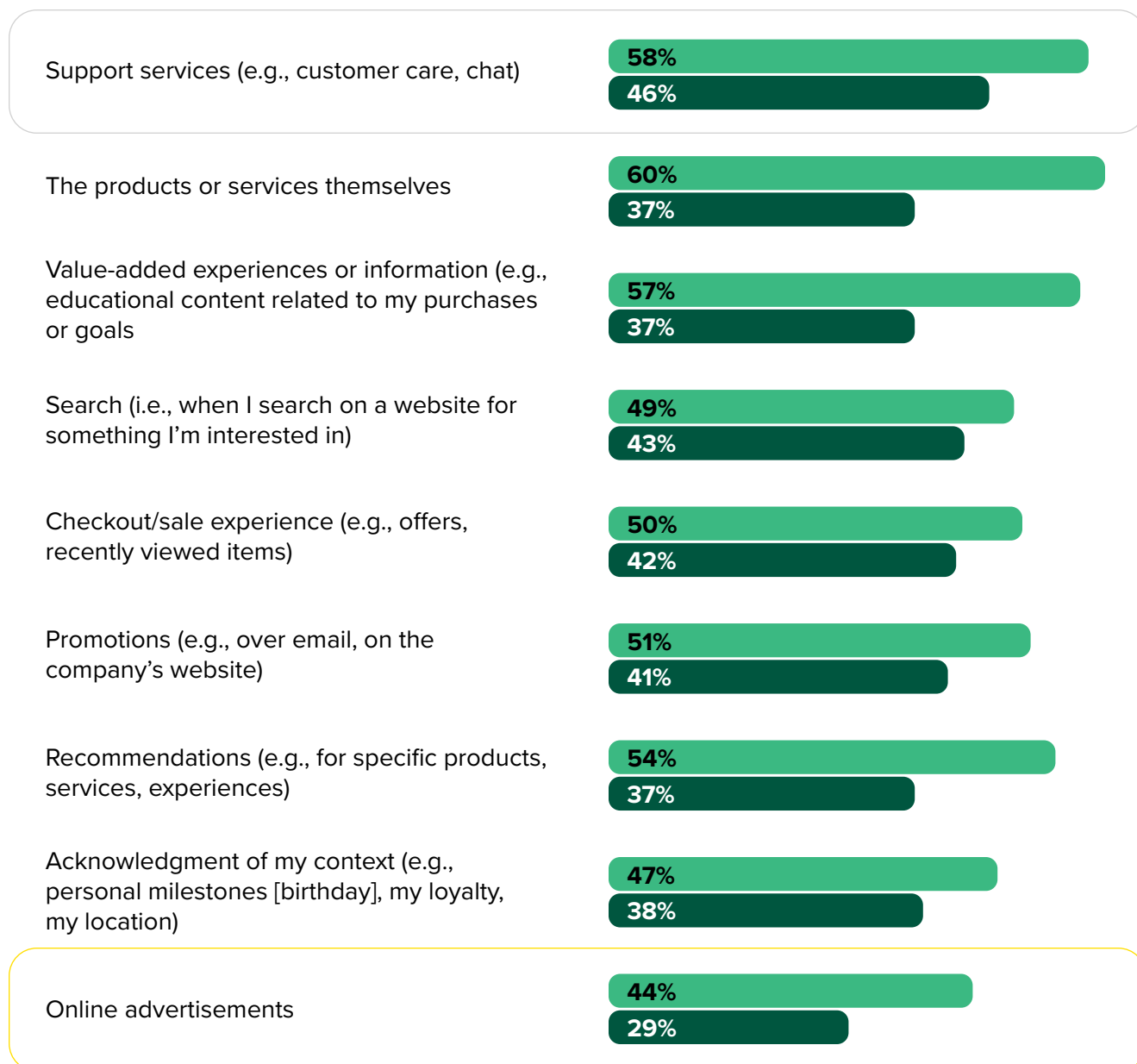
- **Buyers want contextually relevant content that addresses their needs.** Consumers and B2B buyers reported that receiving personalized content for support services was among the most compelling they could receive, and personalized online advertisements were the least compelling (see Figure 16).
- **Experience Leaders are better able to create and optimize the content buyers care about.** These leaders were eight times more likely to use a unified work management tool for the creative production process and five times more likely to have a single place where creative teams could manage assigned tasks, create content, and collaborate in real time. Furthermore, they were four times more likely to use AI/ML to create photorealistic images; tag content with relevant metadata attributes; use a modular content approach; and automate rendering and localization for different devices, screen sizes, channels, and geographies (see Figure 17).
- **Experience Leaders use AI/ML to help deliver more optimized content.** They were eight times more likely to use AI/ML for language and content translation and four times more likely to use these technologies for content analytics, intelligent creation assembly or modular content adoption, and automatic metadata tagging (see Figure 18).

FIGURE 16 CONSUMERS/B2B BUYERS

“How compelling is it to receive personalized content during the following interactions from companies?”

(Showing “Very compelling” or “Extremely compelling”)

● B2B buyers ● Consumers



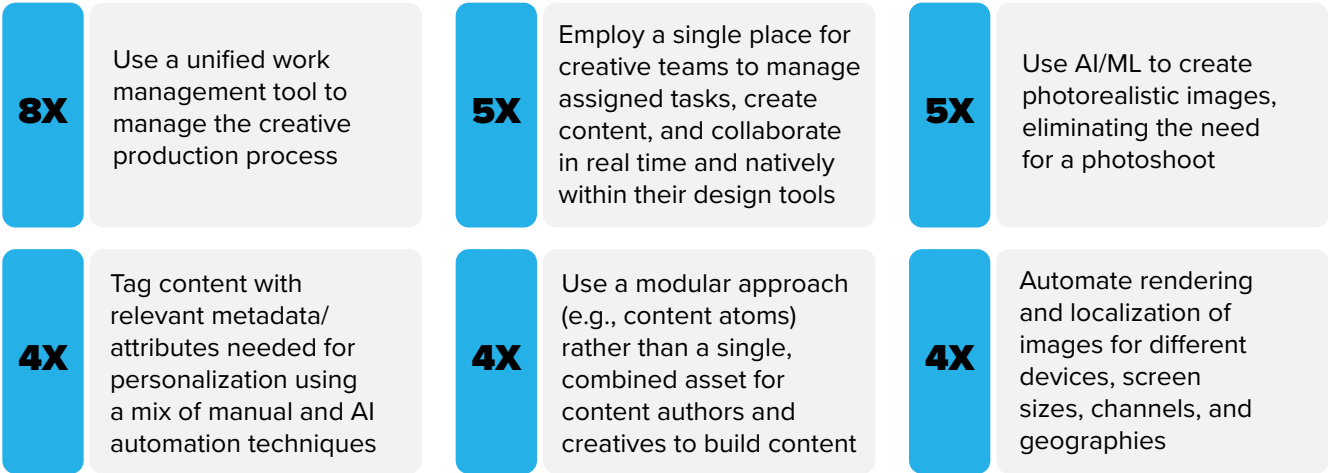
Base: 1,181 respondents; 592 B2B buyers and 589 consumers

Note: Sorted by total average (consumers and B2B buyers)

Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 B2B Buyer and Consumer Personalization Survey [E-61927]

FIGURE 17 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

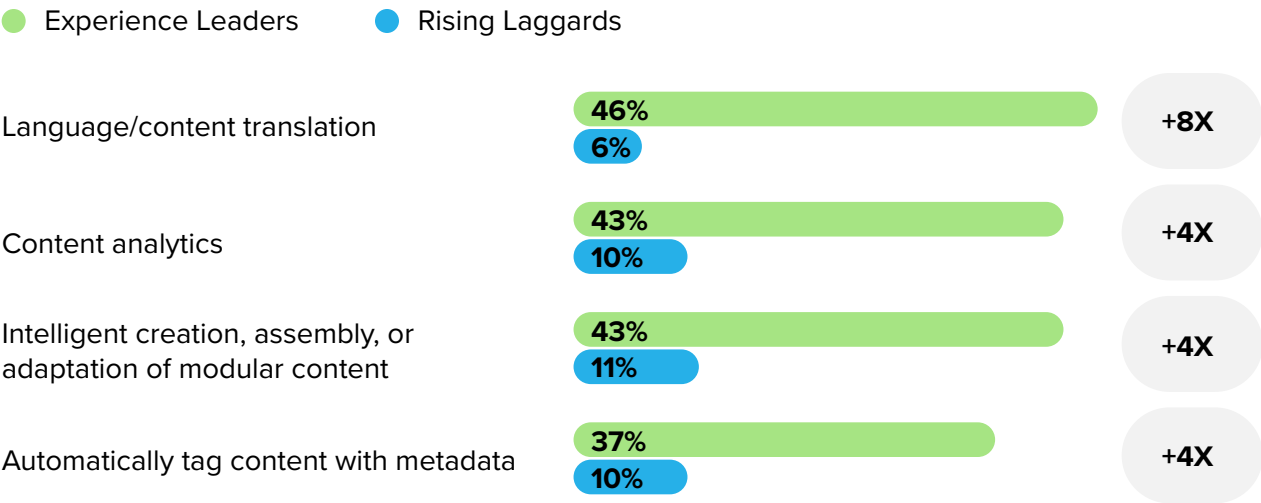
Relative To Rising Laggards, Experience Leaders More Frequently Do The Following With Content Capabilities:



Base: 197 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations; 79 Experience Leaders and 118 Rising Laggards
Note: Showing top six capabilities by delta between Experience Leaders and Rising Laggards
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

FIGURE 18 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

AI/ML Content Capabilities That Organizations Use Today



Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations; 79 Experience Leaders and 118 Rising Laggards
Note: Showing top responses related to AI/ML content capabilities
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

Experience Leaders Use Decisioning To Let Customers Drive Their Own Journeys

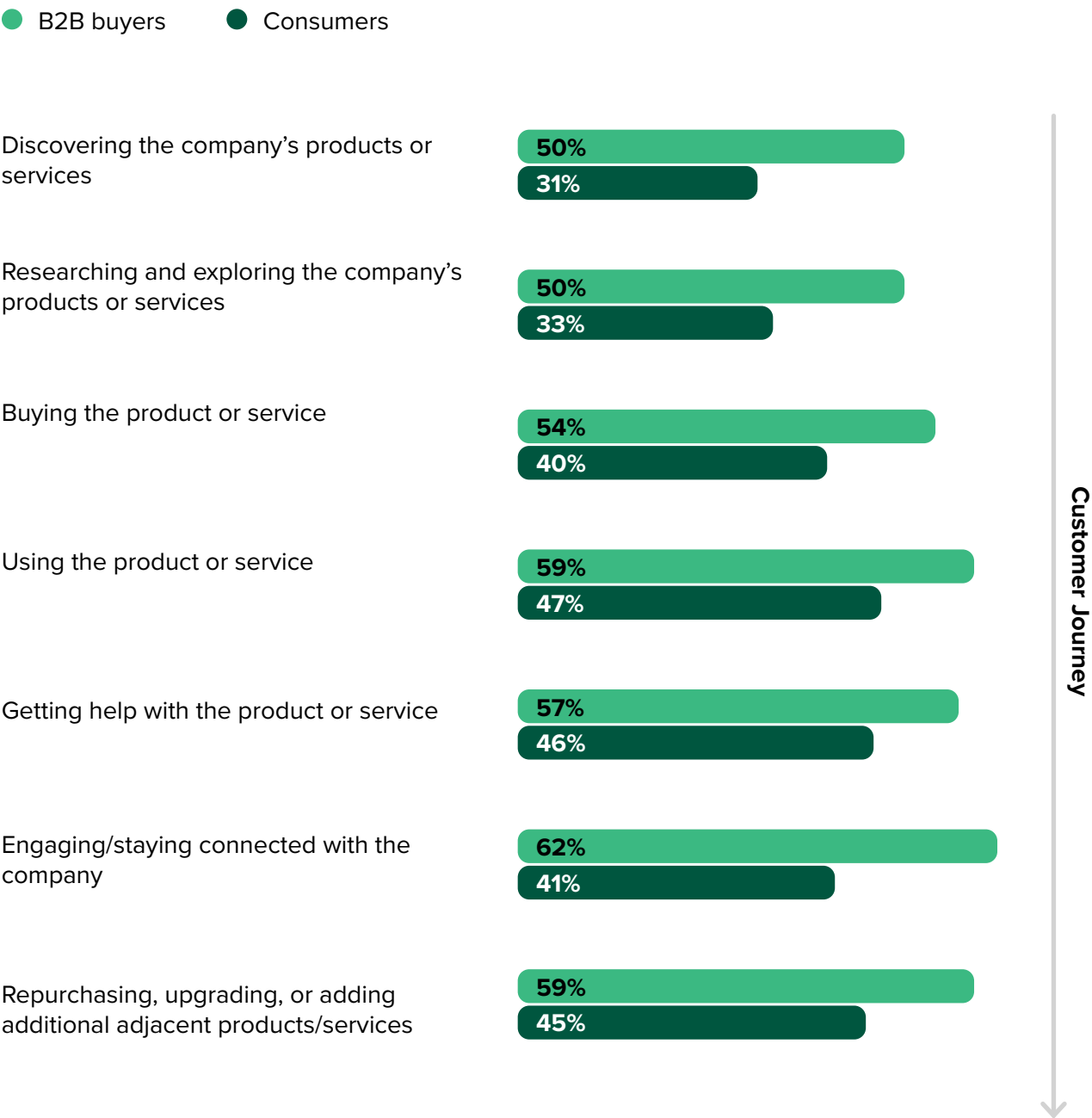
Buyers want relevant and valuable personalized moments delivered when, where, and how they want. They do not want personalized moments based on an organization's assumptions about their buying journey or the journey the organization wants them to take. Experience Leaders understand this — they prioritize personalization tactics that drive customer relevance and value versus tactics focused on stimulating sales. We found that:

- **Buyers expect more personalization later in their buying journeys, yet most organizations don't deliver.** Consumers and B2B buyers were more likely to indicate they expected “mostly” or “fully” personalized content at later buying journey stages, such as when engaging with a company they have already purchased from or repurchasing, upgrading, or adding additional products/services (see Figure 19). However, decision-makers reported that their organizations were likely to provide “mostly” or “fully” personalized interactions at early customer journey stages (e.g., when fostering awareness/discovery, researching, and buying) (see Figure 20).
- **Experience Leaders are better at providing personalized interactions when customers want them.** When comparing the level of personalization at each buying journey stage among Experience Leaders and Rising Laggards, Experience Leaders showed a significant advantage in providing a higher level of personalization during later buying journey stages (e.g., becoming loyal, repeat customers) when buyers expect the highest level of personalization (see Figure 21).

FIGURE 19 CONSUMERS/B2B BUYERS

Level Of Personalization Expected By Buyers At Each Stage Of Their Customer Journey

(Showing “I expect mostly or fully personalized content”)

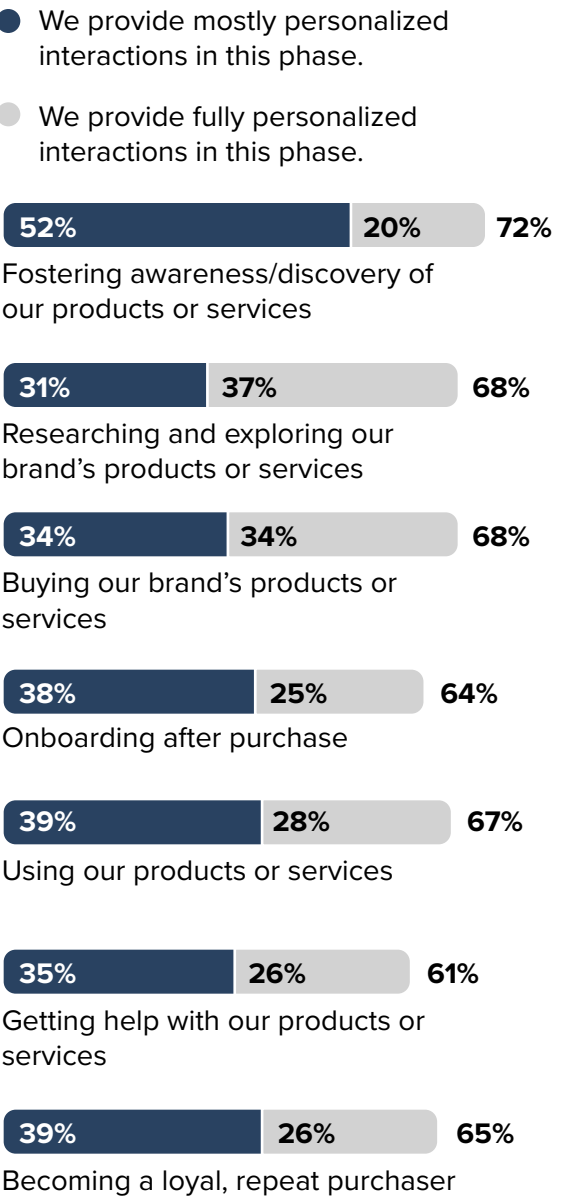


Base: 1,181 respondents; 592 B2B buyers and 589 consumers
Note: Responses in order of customer journey stage
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 B2B Buyer and Consumer Personalization Survey [E-61927]

FIGURE 20

PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Level Of Personalization Provided Today By Organizations



Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations
Note: Responses in order of customer journey stage
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

FIGURE 21

Difference In Level Of Personalization Provided At Each Customer Journey Stage By Experience Leader And Rising Laggard Organizations

(Showing “We provide mostly or fully personalized interactions in this phase”)

Customer Journey Stage	Percentage Point Difference Between Experience Leaders And Rising Laggards
Fostering awareness/discovery of our products or services	23
Researching and exploring our brand's products or services	33
Buying our brand's products or services	22
Onboarding after purchase	23
Using our products or services	26
Getting help with our products or services	22
Becoming a loyal, repeat purchaser	32

Base: 197 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations; 79 Experience Leaders and 118 Rising Laggards
Note: Responses in order of customer journey stage
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

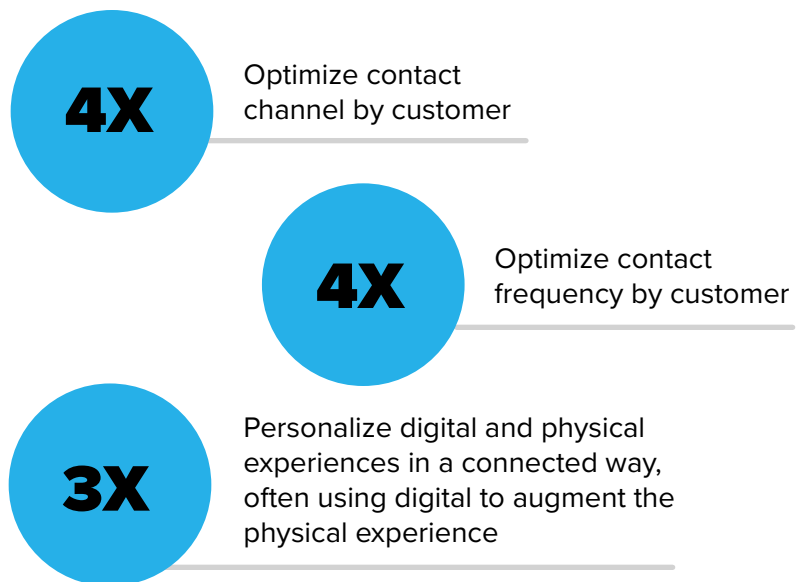
- **Experience Leaders use advanced decision-making capabilities to deliver personalized moments when, where, and how their customers want.** Compared to their less mature peers, Experience Leaders were four times more likely to optimize contact channel and frequency by customer and three times more likely to personalize digital and physical experiences in a connected way (see Figure 22).

FIGURE 22

PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Relative To Rising Laggards, Experience Leaders More Frequently Do The Following With Personalization Decisioning Capabilities:

Base: 197 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations; 79 Experience Leaders and 118 Rising Laggards
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

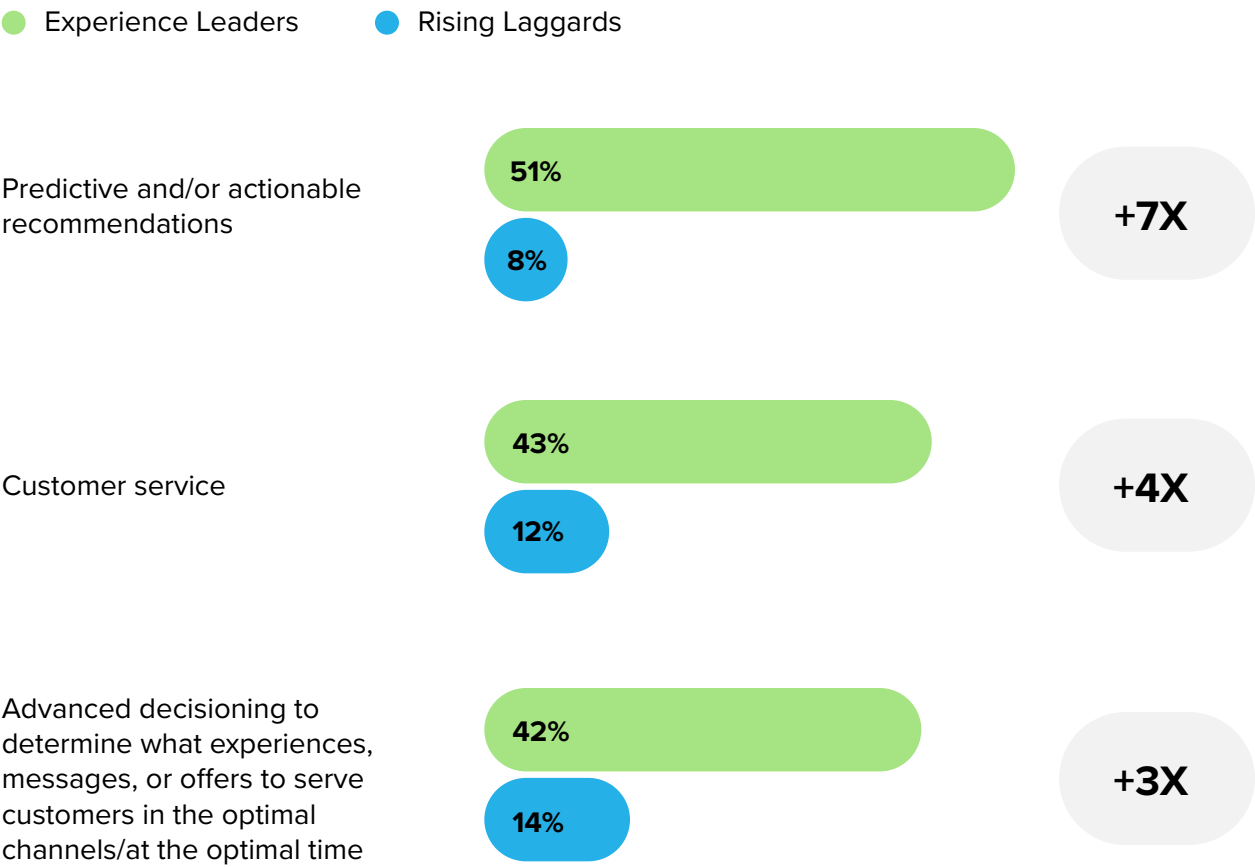


- **Experience Leaders use AI/ML to help deliver the right personalized moments at the right time.** Respondents at these organizations were more likely to use AI/ML technologies: seven times more for predictive/actionable recommendations; four times more for customer service (e.g., chatbots); and three times more for advanced decisioning to determine and deliver the right experiences, messages, or offers in the right channel at the right time (e.g., next best action/offer) (see Figure 23).

FIGURE 23 **PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS**

AI/ML Personalization Decisioning Capabilities That Organizations Use Today

(Showing “We currently do this and are expanding our implementation”)



Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations; 79 Experience Leaders, 450 Scaling Intermediates, and 118 Laggards
Note: Showing top responses related to AI/ML decisioning capabilities
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

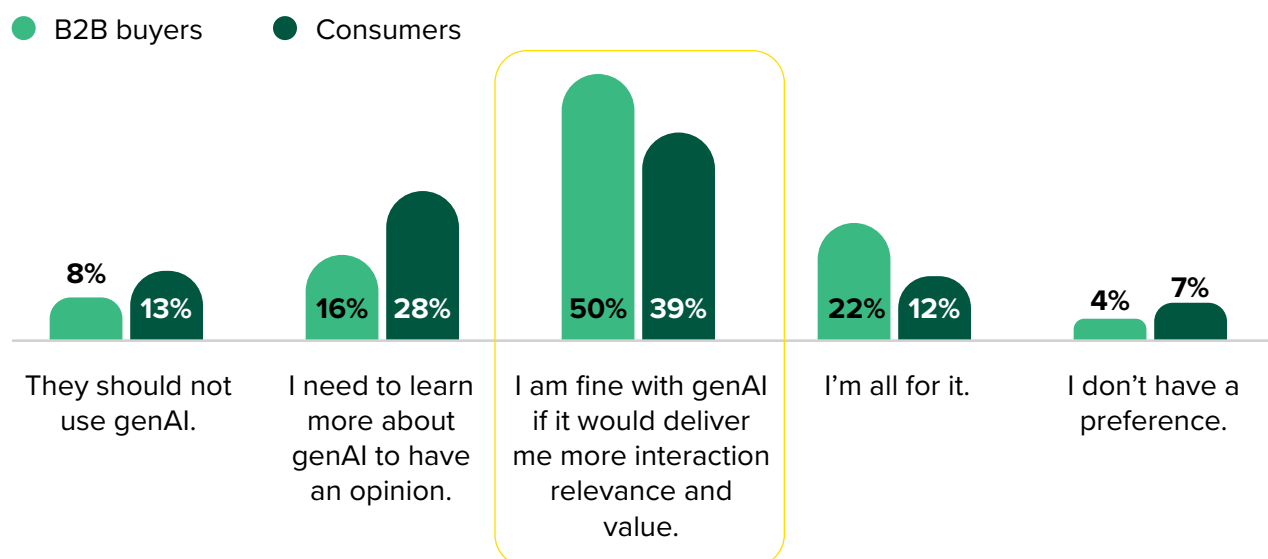
GenAI Has The Potential To Help Organizations Deliver Customers More Relevant And Valuable Personalized Interactions

Overall buyer sentiment toward use of genAI for personalized interactions is similar to their view of any form of personalized interaction — they simply want personalized moments that are relevant and valuable to them.⁵ GenAI can help supercharge organizations' personalization efforts if it's used to help understand, create, and deliver more relevant and valuable moments to customers. We found that:

- **Buyer openness to genAI hinges on its ability to provide added relevance and value.** Many surveyed buyers would be open to genAI use if it improved the relevance and value of the personalized interactions they receive (see Figure 24). The majority of buyers reported believing that genAI will help improve how they interact with organizations in the future and the value they receive from these interactions (see Figure 25).

FIGURE 24 CONSUMERS/B2B BUYERS

Buyer Sentiment Toward GenAI Use For Personalized Interactions



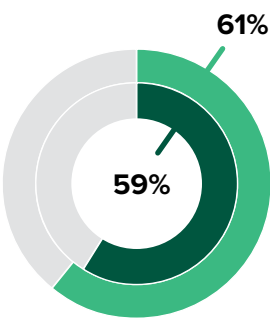
Base: 1,181 respondents; 592 B2B buyers and 589 consumers
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 B2B Buyer and Consumer Personalization Survey [E-61927]

FIGURE 25 CONSUMERS/B2B BUYERS

Buyer Sentiment Toward Future GenAI Use To Interact With Companies

(Showing “Agree” or “Strongly agree”)

B2B buyers Consumers



In the future, genAI will help improve how I interact with companies.

Base: 1,181 respondents; 592 B2B buyers and 589 consumers
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 B2B Buyer and Consumer Personalization Survey [E-61927]

- **GenAI has the potential to help organizations create and deliver personalized moments.** Approximately two-thirds of decision-makers reported that genAI helps their organization provide personalized experiences at scale. Furthermore, a similar percentage reported that genAI will have a positive impact on their organization’s ability to create personalized interactions more effectively and their ability to trigger personalized experiences for customers based on real-time context (see Figure 26). These potential benefits align with emerging genAI use cases that are currently having the most impact for organizations, which include content creation, natural language interface, and application assistants to navigate software/platforms.⁶

FIGURE 26 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Future Benefits Of GenAI On Organizations’ Personalization Programs

Agree Strongly agree

GenAI will help improve my company’s ability to trigger personalized experiences based on real-time context (e.g., location, weather, biometric data).



GenAI will help my organization more efficiently create personalized interactions.



GenAI is transforming my company’s ability to provide personalized experiences at scale.



Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations
Note: Showing three responses
Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

- **However, future strategy changes will be needed to account for genAI opportunities and risks.** Decision-makers reported that customer adoption of genAI will require new internal roles to maintain brand integrity, ensure trust, and address privacy and regulatory concerns. They also expect increased genAI adoption to decrease customer visits to traditional channels (e.g., websites, physical locations, etc.). As a result, the majority of respondents (71%) believe they must identify opportunities to drive additional customer value if they expect customers to engage through traditional channels in the future (see Figure 27).

FIGURE 27 PERSONALIZATION STRATEGY DECISION-MAKERS

Future Personalization Strategy Implications Of GenAI For Organizations

● Agree ● Strongly agree

The proliferation of genAI will require my company to provide more value to its customers in order continue to drive traffic to its own channels (e.g., websites, physical locations).



The rise of genAI for utilitarian use cases (e.g., information retrieval, e-commerce actions) will decrease the need for customers to visit my company's own channels.



GenAI will require new roles to maintain integrity of brand origin, ensure trust, and manage privacy practices.



Base: 647 respondents involved with personalization strategies at their organizations

Note: Showing three responses

Source: Forrester's Q1 2025 Personalization Strategy Survey [E-61927]

Key Recommendations

While the majority of organizations have made strides scaling personalization capabilities and can now deliver personalized experiences throughout the customer journey, many still must work on determining relevant moments that will add value for each customer. Forrester's study yielded several important recommendations for how organizations can improve the ROI of their personalization at scale initiatives:

Understand and respect your customers. Buyers are generally unaware they are receiving personalized interactions. Instead, they assess an interaction with an organization on whether it was relevant or provided value. Buyers view value across four dimensions: functional (i.e., usefulness), economic (i.e., money), experiential (i.e., interactions and sensations), and symbolic (i.e., meaning).⁷

Put your customers at the center of your personalization programs.

Many organizations prioritize business goals, such as driving sales, over customer goals. This leads businesses to focus on early-stage customer journey tactics like advertising, which is at odds with consumers/buyers who find these ads invasive, irrelevant, and unvaluable. Consider the entire customer journey — our survey data reveals buyers find personalized interactions more valuable later in their buying journeys. Prioritize understanding, creating, and delivering personalized moments that are first and foremost relevant to the customer and allow them to extract value from the moment. According to Forrester's 2024 Customer Obsession Survey, organizations that continually put the customer at the center of leadership, strategy, and operations have 51% better customer retention rates, 49% faster profit growth, and 41% faster revenue growth compared to their non-customer-obsessed peers.⁸

A woman with long dark hair is sitting at a desk in a modern office, smiling and looking at a laptop. The office has large windows and contemporary decor.

Convince your customers that sharing their data with your organization

benefits them. Zero-party data can be helpful for personalization efforts, but it requires buyers to intentionally share data with your organization. Collecting more zero-party data to inform personalization programs should be a priority. But companies also need to define what data they actually need.⁹ Forty-five percent of B2C marketing decision-makers say it will be difficult for them to understand the behavior, attitude, motivation, and context of their high-priority customers.¹⁰ Delivering relevant and valuable personalized moments improve the customer experience, and may spur them to share even more personal data, creating a virtuous cycle between your organization and customers.

Improve personalization program measurement. Measuring the business impact of personalization programs is not easy, as tactics are spread across teams and often assessed at the touchpoint level. Focus on a holistic measurement approach that provides a complete view of your organization's personalization efforts across short-, medium-, and long-term periods. Start by testing your personalization programs in the short-term at the touchpoint level to assess lift against nonpersonalization efforts. Then test in the medium-term at the customer journey level to see if you've successfully moved customers from one step in their journey to the next. Finally, assess long-term customer relationships via metrics like customer satisfaction scores after introducing your personalization programs to determine overall customer satisfaction over time.¹¹

Appendix A: Methodology

In this study, Forrester conducted two online surveys. The first survey included 1,181 buyers (589 consumers and 592 B2B buyers) across North America, Europe, and APAC and evaluated their sentiment toward personalization tactics used by the organizations they interact with via digital channels. Questions provided to the participants asked about their feelings toward the personalized moments they receive today and how the organizations they engage with can improve their experiences. The second survey focused on 647 personalization decision-makers across North America, Europe, and APAC and evaluated their organizations’ personalization strategies. Questions provided to the participants asked about their organization’s personalization capabilities and business benefits experienced as a result of their initiatives in this area. Respondents were offered a small incentive as a thank-you for time spent on the surveys. The surveys began in December 2024 and were completed in January 2025.

Appendix B: Demographics

SURVEY 1: BUYERS (CONSUMERS & B2B BUYERS)

CONSUMERS

GEOGRAPHY	
United States	31%
India	21%
Australia and New Zealand	11%
United Kingdom	11%
Germany	9%
France	9%
Japan	9%

AGE GROUP	
Gen Z	16%
Millennials	19%
Gen X	16%
Boomers II	16%
Boomers I	17%
Post War/WWII	16%

INDUSTRIES ENGAGED WITH (TOP 10)	
Retail	74%
Energy and utilities	60%
Online television streaming (OTT)	55%
Financial services	48%
Travel	46%
Telecom	43%
Technology	37%
Hospitality	36%
Insurance	31%
Healthcare	30%

B2B BUYERS

GEOGRAPHY

United States	31%
India	19%
Australia and New Zealand	10%
United Kingdom	10%
Germany	10%
France	10%
Japan	9%

INDUSTRY

Financial services/insurance	14%
Tech/tech services	13%
Manufacturing and materials	8%
Retail	7%
Healthcare	7%
CPG	6%
Transportation and logistics	6%

DEPARTMENT (TOP SIX)

IT	20%
Operations	18%
Finance/accounting	15%
Customer support	10%
HR/training	10%
Sales	10%

INDUSTRIES ENGAGED WITH AS REPRESENTATIVE OF ORGANIZATION (TOP 10)

Technology	56%
Financial services	30%
Retail	28%
Travel	28%
Telecom	24%
Insurance	23%
Hospitality	21%
Energy and utilities	19%
Education	18%
Healthcare	16%

RESPONDENT LEVEL

C-level executive	13%
Vice president	17%
Director	24%
Manager	22%
Project manager	13%
Full-time practitioner	13%

COMPANY SIZE

500 to 999 employees	17%
1,000 to 4,999 employees	35%
5,000 to 19,999 employees	29%
20,000 or more employees	20%

SURVEY 2: PERSONALIZATION DECISION-MAKERS

GEOGRAPHY

United States	32%
India	13%
Australia and New Zealand	13%
United Kingdom	11%
Germany	11%
France	11%
Japan	9%

RESPONDENT LEVEL

C-level executive	22%
Vice president	35%
Manager	43%

COMPANY SIZE

500 to 999 employees	23%
1,000 to 4,999 employees	40%
5,000 to 19,999 employees	22%
20,000 or more employees	15%

INDUSTRY

Financial services/insurance	21%
Tech/tech services	21%
Retail	21%
Travel/hospitality	19%
Broadcast video/OTT and telecommunications	18%

DEPARTMENT (TOP SIX)

Operations	14%
IT	13%
Marketing/advertising	13%
Sales	12%
Data, insights, analytics	11%
Customer experience	9%

BUSINESS MODEL

B2B	22%
B2C	12%
B2B and B2C	66%

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Appendix C: Supplemental Material

RELATED FORRESTER RESEARCH

[Understand Your Audience To Design Better Personalization Initiatives In 2025](#), Forrester Research, Inc., April 24, 2025.

[Personalization Should Pervade The Entire Customer Lifecycle, Not Just The Buying Journey](#), Forrester Research, Inc., January 14, 2025.

[The State Of US Consumer Personalization, 2024](#), Forrester Research, Inc., December 9, 2024.

[The State Of B2B Personalization, 2024](#), Forrester Research, Inc., December 14, 2024.

[Use Personalization To Activate Loyalty Program Value](#), Forrester Research, Inc., September 25, 2024.

[A Technology Overview Of Consumer Personalization](#), Forrester Research, Inc., June 6, 2023.

[A Measurement Approach For Consumer Personalization](#), Forrester Research, Inc., March 15, 2024.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Jessica Liu, [Consumers Are Lukewarm About Your Company's Personalization Efforts](#), Forrester Blogs.

Jessica Liu, [For Measuring Your Personalization Programs, The Number Of The Day Is ... Three!](#), Forrester Blogs.

Jessica Liu, [Ready, Set, Go! Get A Quick Start On Your Consumer Personalization Strategy](#), Forrester Blogs.

Jessie Johnson, [Seven Ways To Use GenAI For B2B Personalization](#), Forrester Blogs.

October 10, 2023, [Personal But Not Creepy: Personalization Attitudes And Altitudes In B2B Marketing](#), Webinar.

Appendix D: Endnotes

¹ Source: [Use Personalization To Activate Loyalty Program Value](#), Forrester Research, Inc., September 25, 2024.

² Source: Stephanie Liu, [Zero-Party Data: The Gift That Keeps On Giving](#), Forrester Blogs.

³ Source: [The State Of Zero-Party Data Platforms, 2024](#), Forrester Research Inc., May 20, 2024.

⁴ Source: [The Anatomy Of A Moment](#), Forrester Research Inc., April 12, 2022.

⁵ Source: [The State Of B2B Personalization, 2024](#), Forrester Research Inc., December 13, 2024.

⁶ Source: [Shift Generative AI In Martech From Theory To Reality](#), Forrester Research Inc., November 6, 2024.

⁷ Source: [The State Of US Consumer Personalization, 2024](#), Forrester Research Inc., December 9, 2024.

⁸ Source: [The State Of Customer Obsession, 2024](#), Forrester Research Inc., May 6, 2024.

⁹ Source: [How To Collect Zero- And First-Party Data You'll Actually Use](#), Forrester Research Inc., June 22, 2023.

¹⁰ Source: [The State Of Zero-Party Data Platforms, 2024](#), Forrester Research Inc., May 20, 2024.

¹¹ Source: [A Measurement Approach For Consumer Personalization](#), Forrester Research Inc., March 15, 2024.

An abstract 3D composition featuring various geometric and organic shapes. In the foreground, a large, dark, textured sphere is partially obscured by a series of concentric, glowing rings. To its right, a large, smooth, light-colored sphere with horizontal stripes is visible. In the background, a smaller, dark, textured sphere floats above a larger, light-colored sphere with a mottled, organic texture. A small, dark, textured sphere is also visible in the upper left. In the lower right, a large, dark, faceted cube or polyhedron is positioned. The entire scene is set against a dark, textured background.

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