# Deepening the database.

How data powers personalization in telecoms, media, and entertainment.

For years, we've witnessed a shift in the digital economy—consumers value experiences over products. And more than ever, they're looking for experiences to be tailored to their unique needs. Customers expect high-quality, digitally driven experiences and self-service options across all channels, at all times. And when those needs aren't met by one brand, they aren't afraid to switch to another.

82%
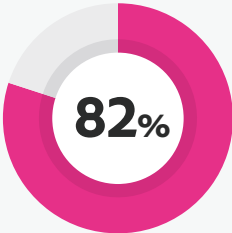
82% of telecom consumers would consider alternatives if they experience a poor customer journey.

27%
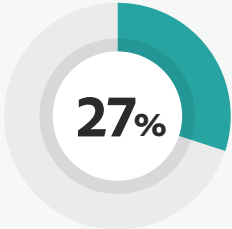
27% of telecom consumers would abandon the purchasing process entirely.

Source: US Telecom Report

For telecom, media, and entertainment (TME) companies, increasingly high expectations have resulted in fierce competition for customers and subscribers. They face high customer churn, competitive pressure to deliver engaging content, and looming macroeconomic environmental pressures to cut costs. And though the removal of third-party cookies has been delayed, many are still unprepared to move forward into a cookieless future.

TME brands that can deliver frictionless and hyper-personalized experiences will be the ones rewarded. According to **Forrester**, the telco industry has the third highest potential to increase revenue by improving customer experience. McKinsey agrees, reporting that telco brands can increase revenue by up to 10% and customer satisfaction up to 30% by implementing analytics and personalization.

To capitalize on this potential, brands need a strong data strategy—one that's built around deep audience datasets that can be quickly accessed and activated—to keep up with increasing expectations and deliver hyper-personalized journeys across every channel and in real time.

Data powers personalization.

TME brands need customer data—and more specifically the right customer data—to know how and when to best personalize experiences. The more brands know about their audience, the more they can cater experiences to each unique preference and need.

According to Accenture, 83% of consumers are willing to provide their data directly to organizations in exchange for a more valuable and personalized experience. This first-party data should be the go-to source for powering personalized experiences.

To power personalization, focus on:

| Enriched data | Privacy-centric data governance | Streamlined collaboration and workflows across businesses | Developing and sharing best practices | Building and maintaining loyalty |

Gathering first-party data is all about building trust with your viewers, subscribers, and fans. For example, **SKY UK** wanted to make its customers' experiences more tailored to their viewing habits. Alongside building experiences to introduce customers to new products or services, the company added preferences like favorite television shows or sports team to customers' profiles. Customer service representations now use this information as conversation starters to build more natural conversations. "We're not just using data in a digital bubble," says Rob McLaughlin, head of digital decisioning and analytics at Sky. "We're actually using artificial intelligence to improve human interactions."

Building a strong data strategy also requires working with a single source of truth instead of disparate data sources. This is especially critical for TME brands that use legacy technology and have data trapped in silos. Establishing a strong customer data platform (CDP) can help improve data ingestion and governance across the company by organizing all data into a single location. That way, it's possible to unlock insights that can be activated in real time to automatically personalize key components of the customer journey.

[Telia Denmark](#) evolved its data strategy by building a consolidated and structured view of all relevant customer data within a CDP. This provides the Danish telecom company the space and resources to generate more data-driven competitive advantages, which means employees spend less time sorting data and more time nurturing customer relationships. "We're investing in new technology and data insights on customer journeys to stay ahead of our customers' needs and wants," says Christian Iversen, head of martech at Telia Denmark. "This comprehensive view on data across departments and functions enables us to become more effective with our customer experience management."

As brands create new experiences, the focus should be on improving quality over time based on customer interactions. Superfans are a clear example. They get up early to watch TV streams to hunt for clues about new shows and movies. They call into podcasts to discuss the direction of their team. They organize their social lives around release dates months or years into the future. Opportunities exist to harness the enthusiasm behind each of these touchpoints. Delivering personalized information through text, social media, chat, email, and phone doesn't just elevate the experience, but it also provides useful real-time data about what fans want more of.

Collect and use data wisely.

TME companies need to acquire and use data wisely. To do both well, a subscription-based business model is key. Every time a customer clicks into an experience online, fills out a form, or updates their streaming favorites, that's all part of their journey. That data can be collected and fed into future experiences for that subscriber. "The subscription economy is about building enough data to understand what the customer wants and being able to create personalized products and services," says Oliver Lomer, industry strategist for telecoms, media, and entertainment at Adobe. "From there, it's all about retention."

More than ever, viewers are willing to pay a premium for personalized content that matches their interests. YPulse, the leader in global Gen Z and Millenial consumer insights, found that one-third of Europe's Gen Z and millennials and nearly half of young males purchase monthly video game subscription services. Additionally, Statista reported that Europe was Spotify's largest market in 2021 with 121 million users, and that 70% of Europe's digital music revenue came from paid subscription services. TME companies that can harness data from their customers' profiles are at a significant advantage for delivering the kinds of experiences that breed loyalty.

70%

70% of Europe's digital music revenue came from paid subscription services in 2021.

Source: Statista

Even with the right data, TME brands need a strong digital strategy to activate it effectively. Many struggle to appeal to a younger demographic that consumes media exclusively through fast-changing digital platforms. Others find it difficult to improve the quality of experiences during a subscription period or when renewals become relevant, or they have trouble convincing customers to pay for subscriptions that help brands gather data through customer profiles in the first place. Despite these challenges, data gained from subscriptions is extremely valuable for creating unique and personalized experiences.

The data and insights from your subscription customers can help:

- Inform your personalized experiences.
- Drive engagements.

- Reduce acquisition costs.
- Build long-term relationships.

The PGA TOUR took the opportunity to hone in on ways for fans to access behind-the-scenes action, news, and storytelling—and not just on TV, but on the web and social media. Personalization across the TOUR's digital platforms now allows fans to identify their favorite players, pin their heroes to a leaderboard, and receive push notifications across all mobile apps. "Ultimately, we know that each fan has their own individual journey, so we've customized our content around those different segments and how they engage with the sport," says Travis Trembath, vice president of fan engagement for the PGA TOUR.

Create a winning data strategy.

The specific data strategy will vary by organization, but generally the most meaningful data is what can help you elevate the customer experience while getting closer to your business goals. Here's how to decide what data you need:

Begin with the end in mind.

- As an organization, identify your priority goals that you want to achieve.

- Internally agree upon the KPIs so that teams across your organization can break down silos and collaborate effectively.

- Articulate how these goals will ultimately benefit the customer.

Identify a specific segment to test.

- When you look at your desired outcomes, determine which subset of your audience finds the most value in your business objective.

- Start mapping out that segment's ideal journey to identify optimal points for data collection that can guide your customers along the way.

Flag the data you have and the data you need.

- This will help guide the journey as you work toward your goal.

- Craft questions in creative ways that customers will want to answer while collecting valuable data.

List specific tactics and channels for collecting new audience data.

- Focus on the channels and tactics they are most likely to engage with:

    - Web and mobile registrations and sign-ups

    - Welcome and re-engagement campaigns

    - Ongoing surveys and quizzes

    - Web-based partner applications

Centralize all the data you gather from your chosen audience.

- Get your IT team involved to break down the silos between the disparate data collection systems across your organization in a way that keeps customer data safe and secure.

- As you're keeping track of all this incoming data, ideally store it in a centralized and actionable CDP so you're able to activate personalized experiences at scale during key moments that matter.

Pace your data collection cadence.

- The quickest way to annoy your audience is to ask for too much information too quickly.

- Instead, think like a customer to help you figure out a starting point.

- To scale, use artificial intelligence and machine learning to optimize data collection for you.

Activate the valuable data you collected.

- Make the value to the audience clear so they have a reason to engage.

- Remember that durable identifiers (e.g., email address), are not necessarily required for many effective real-time or next-click activations.

- Measure, test, and adjust to keep the digital dialogue going— every new piece of data can help you further personalize the next interaction.

Build your path forward.

Creating a strong data strategy is the best way for TME brands to deliver quality personalization at scale. To build that strategy, it's crucial to think like a consumer. That means making outreach feel more like a conversation than a transaction and humanizing data collection to build customers' trust. When growing your database, approach data in terms of quality over quantity. Once you've established trust with your customers, you may need less data overall to power these engaging, personalized experiences.

While collecting data is one thing, having the right tools to access and act on it is another. As you collect more data, keeping it centralized in a customer data platform will help you uncover more valuable insights about each subscriber. With that centralized foundation in place, you'll need to structure marketing, IT, and product teams around how to best use customer data and encourage close collaboration. That way, you'll have the power to automate tasks and create personalized experiences at scale in real time—across all your channels—and ultimately build strong relationships with your customers.

Learn more about how to use data to build personalized experiences and engage with customers in the right moments.

Read more

Sources

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