

IGNITION **ONE**

# The Key to True Omnichannel Personalization

---

Learn how Customer Intelligence helps  
marketers build lasting customer relationships.





## The Evolution of Personalization

In today's environment, marketers are able to interact with customers across a growing number of channels, devices, and touchpoints, both online and offline. Throughout their growing relationship with a brand, customers expect that they will be recognized as the same individual over time, no matter the device or channel that they use. Customers also expect that the messaging they receive from brands will reflect an awareness of their products of interest, their stage in purchase journey, as well as their overall relationship to the product and the brand.

There's a wealth of industry research that substantiates the importance of personalization: A 2016 study revealed that **75% of consumers** are more likely to buy from a retailer that recognizes them by name, recommends options based on past purchases, or knows their purchase history. A 2017 survey found that **87% of consumers** say that personally relevant content positively influences how they feel about a brand. Clearly, these numbers highlight how valuable it is for marketers to personalize their approach to customers—and yet, many marketers are struggling to put this knowledge into practice.



Research shows that **83% of marketers** say that creating personalized content is their biggest challenge, with **less than 10%** of retailers reporting that they are highly effective at personalization.



The challenge is, marketers most often focus efforts on what they think is personalization—but which turns out is most often a buzzword applied to features within single point solutions that individualize communication. In truth, personalization is not merely a feature of disparate marketing technologies, but a discipline within marketing and customer experience functions that involves the design, deployment, and ongoing optimization of systems that reach current, future, and past customers with truly relevant messaging at key moments of interaction.

**True omnichannel personalization should be delivered across engagement channels, throughout the customer lifecycle.**

In other words, personalization requires more than software. It requires creativity, knowledge, and resources—yet still, most marketers have traditionally seen personalization as simply a feature set that accompanies their technology investments.

There are indications, however, that marketers are shifting their approach. Many are accelerating investments in personalization as a discipline, dedicating resources and investing in technologies and partnerships that holistically enable more effective omnichannel personalization. We believe that this trend will accelerate over the next few years, as marketers' pursuit of personalization intensifies.

In this ebook, we will explore the factors contributing to the rise of personalization, as well as the various ways marketers are leveraging Customer Intelligence to better reach their customers with personalized interactions across channels.



## CHAPTER 1

# An Explosion of Data

Over the past few years, the amount of data generated by the systems around marketing and customer interactions has skyrocketed. As new channels come online, an already-growing data set grows exponentially.

At the same time, a growing range of data sources and signals, from first-party data sources to third-party data sources, to new marketing channels, to real-time data such as inventory availability, nearby physical locations, local weather conditions, and so on are proliferating.

This trend is most likely to continue and will present key challenges, including the ability to effectively leverage this data for meaningful messaging and engagement opportunities. Marketers will also have to adapt quickly to the challenge of executing coordinated efforts across these new channels. Throughout, we cannot understate the importance of leveraging insights to recognize which customers, messaging, message cadence, contextual signals, and other data sets are most valuable.





## First-Party Data: The New Fuel for Personalization

Today's customers have come to expect personalized interactions from brands. Marketers need a rich source of customer data to power these interactions. Historically much of this data has come from third parties, but in the midst of **heightened concerns surrounding private data sharing**, marketers should prioritize first-party data as their most valuable asset.

First-party data refers to the information that customers provide to marketers directly: their products of interest, purchase history, website visits, and so on. Brands can leverage this data to better understand their customers and refine their marketing efforts to maximize results. Here are three ways marketers can realize the full potential of this valuable data set:

### 1. Target your most valuable customers.

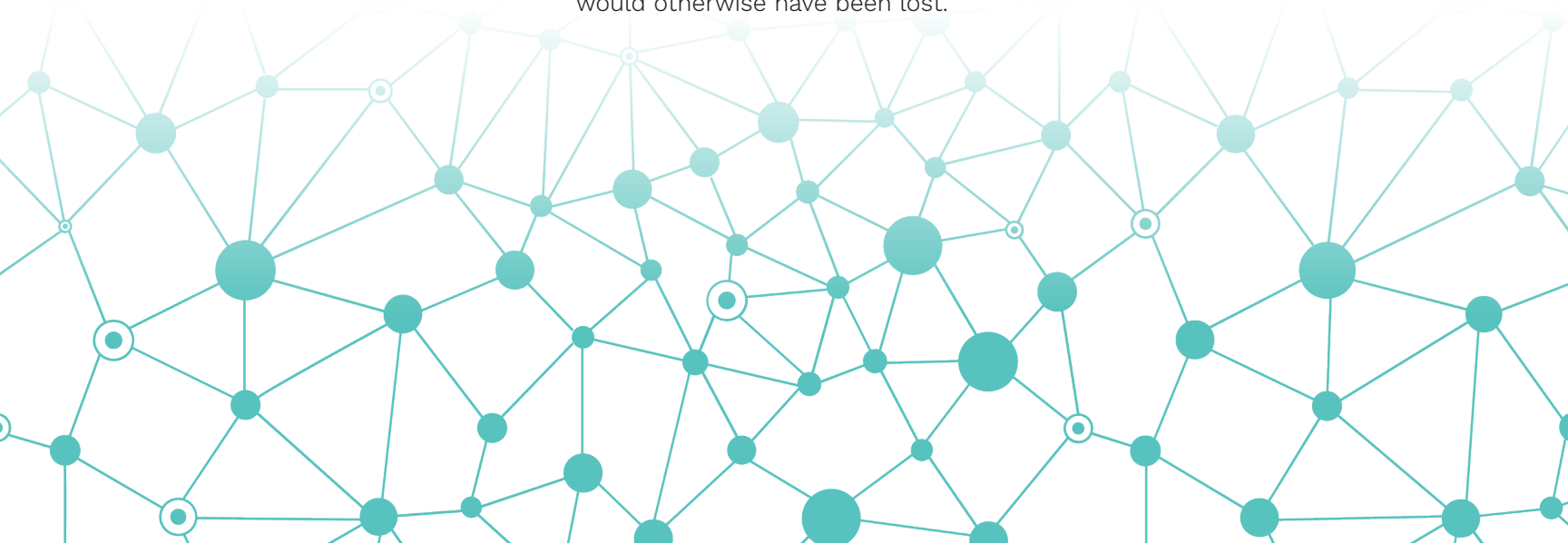
Marketers can enhance their targeting capabilities by leveraging first-party data to inform their bidding strategies. Customer-level insights enable marketers to create specific audience segments based on each customer's shopping behavior, level of engagement, and stage in the customer journey. Marketers can then modify bids to target their most engaged customers at vital decision-making moments.

### 2. Deliver timely triggered messages.

By now, marketers are well aware of the prevalence of cart abandonment. Some studies find that cart abandonment occurs at rates as high as 80%—that's four out of every five customers choosing not to complete a purchase, despite apparent intent. Real-time data on customer engagement and on-site activity enable marketers to predict an individual's intent to leave. Marketers can utilize behavioral indicators to trigger personalized messaging that reminds the customer of the items in their cart and provides incentive to purchase. By preemptively aiding potential cart abandoners through the customer journey, marketers can capture a huge portion of sales that would otherwise have been lost.

### 3. Be smart about remarketing.

Brands can leverage first-party data to inform their remarketing efforts. For example, marketers can target existing customers with display ads that offer product recommendations based on the customer's previous purchases. A personalized email could provide a periodic reminder to make recurring purchases for products such as the customer's preferred shampoo and toothpaste. By building upon the customer's past interactions with the brand and demonstrating knowledge of their product interests, marketers can go a long way in building brand loyalty.





First-party data is a valuable resource that is often under-utilized. Many marketers focus on the small percentage of known customers, and neglect to realize the potential of the significantly larger set of anonymous customers that have yet to convert.

Digital-first, direct-to-consumer brands like Warby Parker spearheaded the renewed focus on first-party brand data. The ability to engage customers with streamlined messaging has played a major role in these brands' success. Now, traditional brands must follow suit as they begin to break down the data silos within their organizations. Coupled with the growing sophistication of better integrated omnichannel data and tech stacks, marketers are waking up to the fact that their first-party data bears untapped opportunity.

Major CPG marketers led by the likes of Procter & Gamble have realized that churning out the same generic, all-encompassing message to a wide range of people is no longer as effective a marketing tactic as it was in the past. By leveraging their first-party data through the investment and commitment to a cohesive, omnichannel data tech stack, marketers can gain the insights necessary to deliver relevant personalized messaging that more effectively engages their customers. Personalized interactions that establish a dialogue with the customer ultimately promote greater engagement and lifetime value for the brand.



## Personalization Requires Data Technology Infrastructure

With an estimated \$800 BN to be put forth to personalization efforts in the next 5 years, personalization is more than a priority for marketers—it is a necessity. Part of the problem is that the customer data that marketers have is not unified. Identity linking is a core piece to fixing this issue—customers engage with brands through various devices and channels, and marketers must figure out how to match customer identities across multiple touchpoints in 2019. Tying customer IDs together also involves audience management and measurement. Measurement can finally be done on newer channels because marketers are tying IDs back with the help of partners and third parties who have their own ID.

For personalized marketing to truly fulfill its potential, data connectivity is vital. But because most marketers are organized around siloed channels and not around the facilitation of the customer journey, seamless personalization has been difficult to achieve because companies have not invested in the data and technology infrastructure required to benefit.

LiveRamp, a data onboarding company, has seen firsthand the limitations to create and maintain this ongoing flow seamlessly across channels.

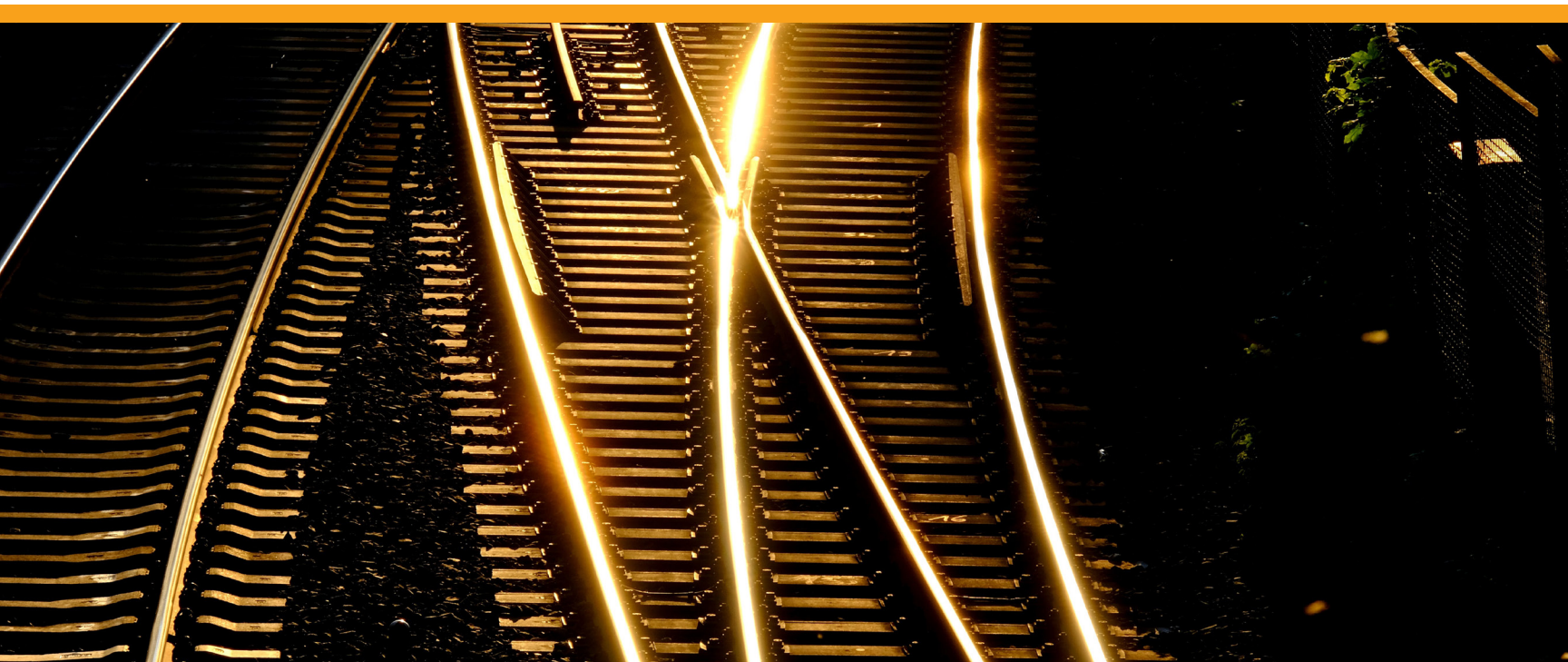
“

“There are traditional customer engagement touchpoints including call centers, direct mail, and telemarketing. Now add thousands of digital micro-channels on top of that and you can see just how hard it is to have natural conversations with people.”

Jeff Smith, Chief Marketing Officer at LiveRamp.

”

Marketers must realize that the next decade will be won or lost based on their ability to properly implement the necessary data and technology infrastructure. For example, IgnitionOne has spent the last two years investing in our technology to realize our vision as a centralized platform for Customer Intelligence that helps marketers leverage their most valuable data. By investing in their infrastructure now, marketers will be more able to adapt to changes in emerging technology, as well as more equipped to onboard new data sources in 2019 and the coming years.





## CHAPTER 2

# Proliferation of Marketing Channels

Every year, trendy new marketing channels emerge just as others fade from relevance. With each new channel, new opportunities emerge for data collection, targeting, engagement, measurement, and optimization.

Historically, marketers have struggled to coordinate omnichannel efforts to create seamless customer journeys. Brands have found it difficult to calculate the optimal frequency and sequencing across the range of customer touchpoints. These often disjointed efforts can be attributed to the general lack of integration among organizational silos that include CRM, paid advertising, email, and so on.

In the coming years, new channels will present the most significant opportunities for marketers including connected devices like FireTV, Alexa, and Google Home; metasearch sites such as TripAdvisor and Amazon; new ecommerce opportunities within social media and in-app environments; as well as the pursuit of integrations with long-standing offline systems such as kiosks and point-of-sale systems.

Marketers today will need to nimbly identify and invest in these new channels as they come online to take advantage of new opportunities. Trying to coordinate between two to three systems, much less 20, can significantly slow down any digital marketing strategy—or even bring it to a grinding halt. Marketers must start with a clear road map: embracing the implementation of a data tech plan that could encapsulate everything from a central data platform (CDP), a data management platform (DMP), to a classic CRM platform.

These systems need to be designed to put the customer first, not marketer, agency, or platform. Currently the digital marketing ecosystem seems to emphasize the benefits of personalization almost exclusively in terms of what the marketer can gain, with value to the customer as an afterthought. For personalization to truly succeed, the industry needs to flip the script by starting with what is best for the customer before implementing the necessary technology infrastructure.





## Adtech-Martech Convergence

More brands and companies are bringing services in-house, instead of relying on third party agencies. In fact, 78% of brands have some form of an in-house agency. The idea is to instill control back in the hands of marketers and creators, to tackle the current transparency problem that the industry has faced for years. However, there are downsides and challenges companies will face, including increased costs, the competitive talent landscape, fees and more.

Many marketers underestimate the challenge of the technical implementation process. Oracle's recent purchase of Grapeshot is an excellent example of how large enterprise software players have been pursuing a roll-up strategy that accelerates the convergence of marketing and advertising channels over the past several years. The pursuit of a fully integrated end-to-end technology stack could lead to more efficient personalization as data, analytics, targeting and dynamic creative optimization can all be brought together seamlessly.

“Historically, our industry has been pretty good about applying using data to inform media channel selection,” said Susan Borst, IAB Vice President, who runs the Mobile Marketing Center of Excellence. “With the continued adoption of the Dynamic Content Ad Standard, data can now inform the creative itself. What’s exciting about dynamically-rendered creative is that it allows the message to more accurately reflect that specific person’s intent at the time they receive the message.”

The road to personalization has been paved with many milestones. One pivotal moment was the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) Tech Lab's release of its Dynamic Content Ad Standard in May 2017. Version 1.0 was published to provide the industry with guidelines for creating creative components using metadata. This standard was designed to help all players in the data-driven advertising supply chain—from developers to ad servers, as well as advertisers and agencies—better coordinate the creation of personalized dynamic ads.

In today's world where customers receive advertising in countless environments, marketers need maximize their efforts to circumvent ad blindness—this means delivering an effectively personalized ad (or other piece of branded content) to the right person at the right time. In 2019, the digital advertising ecosystem has matured to a point on the cusp of true personalization.





## CHAPTER 3

# Changing Customer Expectations


---

In an era of data privacy scandals and widespread adoption of ad-blocking technology, customers are becoming ever more wary of intrusive or excessive messaging. Regulation has driven marketers to comply by tracking customer preferences that include channel opt-ins and opt-outs, which has now broadened to include access and deletion requests. These factors suggest a future where customers are increasingly sensitive toward perceived over-communication or misuse of data—and are also able to take action to exclude themselves from an enterprise's marketing efforts entirely.

In this environment, investments to ensure broad real-time customer understanding will be critical for effective, scalable personalization. Understanding the correct frequency of messaging, for example, can help marketers maximize impact, optimize resource allocation, and reduce customer burnout.

## An Omnichannel Approach

As technology evolves, so too do customer expectations for relevance. Customers expect that the messaging they receive from brands will reflect an awareness of their products of interest, their stage in the purchase journey, as well as their existing relationship with the brand. In 2019, marketers will start to realize that they must adapt and personalize effectively or risk burning out their customer file.



Last year, 41% of consumers switched brands due to lack of personalization.

Customer data platforms (CDPs) and more traditional data management platforms (DMPs) are great tools for amassing foundational knowledge. The problem with implementing these platforms that has become all too common is that marketers end up spreading their resources too thin and siloing their customer data among disparate technology stacks. As a result, marketers find themselves with more decentralization of their data and a more fragmented customer view than ever.

The true levers for personalized marketing must come from a behavioral component. Modern customers want to be recognized by their favorite brands as the same individual across devices, channels and sessions. They expect coordinated offers that show awareness of their intent, previous relationship with the brand, and stage within their purchase journey.

For personalization to be effective in the years to come, marketers will need tools to leverage available data sets and channels, and with adequate customer understanding, provide messaging relevance and timeliness that meet these expectations.

“Marketers have made progress over the years in sharing data among various teams,” says Bridget Bidlack, SVP of Product at Movable Ink, an email marketing technology company. “The next step is to be able to organize and analyze their data more efficiently so it can be applied to all channels and activated in the key moments of consumer intent.”

Ross Andrew Paquette, the CEO of Maropost, a cloud-based sales and marketing solutions company, agrees. “No client would just want email personalization.”

“It has to have multichannel implications.”

The technology that makes true personalization possible has only become viable in recent years. While there is plenty of room for improvement, there is now a base level of competence in terms of bringing disparate data sets together to create a more comprehensive and nuanced view of the customer experience. This includes combining customer footprints across offline as well as digital touchpoints. Central to personalization is the ability to respond to interactions with relevant messaging across channels, throughout the purchase journey and across the brand relationship.



## CHAPTER 4

# Rise of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

Big Data brings big challenges for effective personalization. In the coming years, the challenges will continue to grow. The tools that marketers choose must process data and take action across large data sets. With the volume of data today and the growth anticipated in the next years, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) will be critical components of these tools.

With all of the advances being made in the field of AI and the implications of machine learning in the world of digital marketing, the level of precision and the impact of personalized marketing will be unbounded. Within the next year, AI will empower marketers with access to unprecedented levels of customer behavior insights. The next generation of AI will more easily catalog elements that can inform the construction and creation of a given piece of creative. Advanced AI will also make a huge impact on the industry's ongoing efforts to move away from last-click attribution and towards a more nuanced and holistic comprehensive view of how each branded interaction with a given customer influenced that individual on his or her path to purchase. True cross-channel attribution could finally be achievable as AI technology enables more granular analysis of reach, message, channel and creative.

These advances will make a significant impact on the ability to improve cross-device and cross-channel attribution measurement, as well as have a positive impact on addressing the fraud challenge in digital advertising. Personalized advertising will increase the chance by many degrees that humans and not bots will receive brand messaging.



Furthermore, marketers must start to invest in machine learning technologies that will help enable individualized, contextually relevant messaging. For example, tools that use propensity modeling and neural networks to derive real-time contextual signals, purchase intent, customer lifecycle stages, and more to influence channel and bid selection and enhance targeting, while also enabling the personalization of paid advertising creatives.

Early adopters of such tools will also likely find value in cross-device identity resolution, which employs machine learning to map the millions of connected devices to individuals—helping marketers ensure the right message is reaching the right person.

ML-based orchestration is also making its way into marketing platforms, which is the beginning of the end for the human-configured “multichannel marketing campaign”.

For marketing technology vendors, the orchestration tools of the future will leverage machine learning techniques to determine the best audiences, messaging, channels, and bids to reach customers—which may mean the end of workflow tools for manually sequencing multichannel marketing messages. Though the “self-driving” omnichannel marketing platform of the future may be far off, in the next few years, even more marketers will start to gain the courage and confidence to invest in such tools.

As nascent channels are now becoming targetable for single audiences, measurability is finally here for traditional channels (i.e. OOH, television, etc.). AI and ML will have a significant impact on marketers’ ability to improve cross-device and omnichannel attribution measurement, enabling them to attribute results to identify their most effective channels.



Through the use of AI and ML tools, marketers will have access to unprecedented levels of customer behavior insights. As the volume of customer data continues to grow, AI and machine learning will be vital in making this data actionable.

These tools will give marketers a more nuanced, comprehensive understanding of each customer's purchase journey and relationship with the brand.



## CHAPTER 5

# Delivering Customer Intelligence


With the above challenges to navigate, marketers will not be able to succeed with tools alone.

Effective personalization tools alone won't deliver timely, relevant messaging, or customer understanding by themselves. Developing the most innovative AI or ML technology will not help marketers if they do not recognize that this technology is only the means to developing Customer Intelligence.

Customer Intelligence broadly refers to systems that analyze customer behavior to enable more effective marketing decisions. At the core of CI is the ability to collect customer data from a variety of sources, process that data in real-time to produce actionable insights, which then inform better decisions about how to best engage each customer with an omnichannel approach.





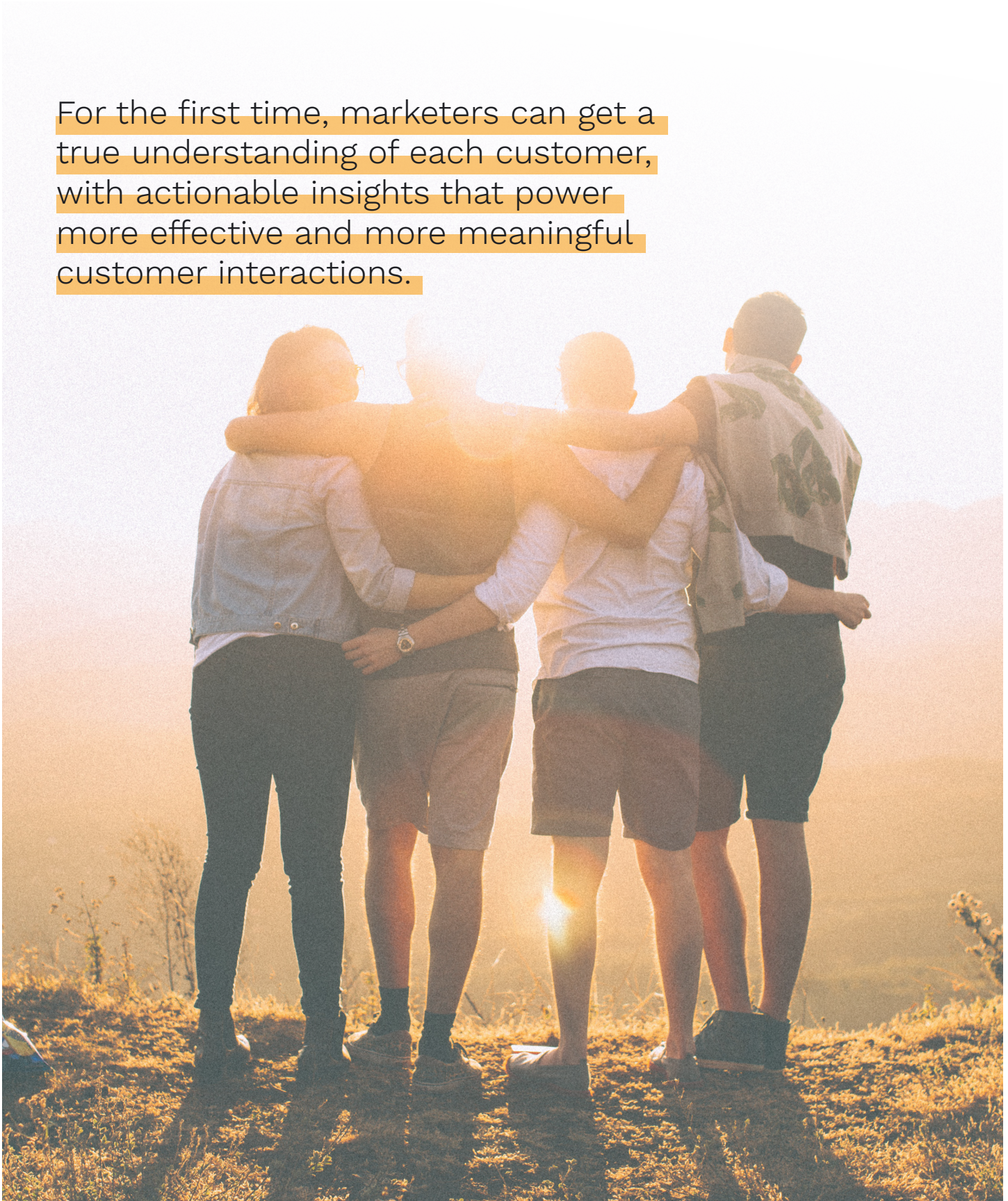


Customer Intelligence has changed the personalization game by giving marketers more functionality and connectivity.

It unifies enormous amounts of customer data from disparate sources and manages real-time programmatic technology in a single location, while supporting seamless integration with any existing third-party ad-tech and mar-tech stack.



For the first time, marketers can get a true understanding of each customer, with actionable insights that power more effective and more meaningful customer interactions.







Customer Intelligence helps inform omnichannel personalization by giving marketers a real-time understanding of each customer's products of interest, level of engagement, and stage in the customer journey, and then passing this information to other platforms to inform targeting, creatives, and remarketing efforts. In this way, marketers can execute their strategy more efficiently, without having to sort through different ranges of customer data in different platforms.

Marketers who make use of Customer Intelligence platforms are able to tie all the data they collect to individual customers and integrate that information across other ad-tech and mar-tech solutions to connect a single ID to each customer. This capability enables them to arrive at a long sought-after goal: True one-to-one omnichannel personalization.





# IGNITION ONE

## About IgnitionOne

IgnitionOne's leading Customer Intelligence Platform empowers marketers to find and engage their most valuable customers across channels using a data-driven approach. By focusing on cross-channel scoring and robust personalization, IgnitionOne's technology provides real-time, actionable insights for smarter marketing decisions and omnichannel engagement to maximize overall results.

IgnitionOne is one of the largest independent marketing technology companies in the world, currently scoring over 600 million users monthly in 75 countries and powering more than \$60 billion in revenue each year for leading brands, including General Motors, Stuart Weitzman, The Cosmopolitan and Speedo, as well as advertising agencies such as 360i, GroupM and Zenith Media.

---

[www.ignitionone.com](http://www.ignitionone.com)  
[info@ignitionone.com](mailto:info@ignitionone.com)  
[@ignitionone](https://twitter.com/ignitionone)