

# Personalized Marketing @ Scale



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While browsing through the Internet, have you ever noticed that when casually visiting webpages or clicking on content, some ads feel targeted and contextually relevant (seeing advertisements featuring same apparel you just viewed after visiting a fashion e-commerce site), and sometimes what gets served is not contextually relevant and, in some cases, the message does not even fit the destination environment (a pharmaceutical ad on sports news website).

The fundamental difference between the two situations is a marketer's focus on delivering contextually relevant, impactful communication while keeping consumer's intent at the core — simply said, delivering the right message to the right person at the right time.

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

We live in a hyper-connected digital world, where consumer behaviors are constantly evolving. In the last five years, the way we consume media, which devices we consume it on, or even how we interact or share the media has evolved drastically.

While the attention of today's consumer is shrinking to seconds, the desire to get interesting and relevant content is still high. In fact, studies have proved that consumers today are open to receiving marketing messages or advertisements if they either provide value or are contextually relevant.

As the digital landscape continues to evolve and as technology allows us to better tag, serve and analyze digital media, the pressure on marketers to adapt to this new way of "personalized marketing" will only increase. With the emergence of data management platforms (DMPs) that allow better tracking and understanding of consumer behaviors and interests, this data coupled with any 3rd party or owned analytics will provide clear, actionable insights to serve more relevant and compelling advertisements, thus delivering higher results.

DMPs will help segment audiences, and brands will be able to serve different creative to different microsegments. For example, if you are a sports apparel e-commerce site, instead of serving everyone with generic sports-based

banner ad, you would be able to segment your total audience and serve a tennis-interested audience with tennis-featured creative.

The key element is to learn from consumer behavior on many attributes such as preferences, platforms and purchases. Technology has advanced to allow us to consolidate all these behavioral data points and identify the intent of consumer within the marketing funnel to deliver a more compelling message.

## SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Beyond implementing any technology solution, the future is taking a strategic approach to collecting data and applying it across all digital touchpoints to ultimately gain longitudinal behavioral learning of your consumer. It starts with recognizing your core consumer and understanding the intent of that consumer and where the person is in his/her journey on path to purchase.

The three-stage framework below outlines one possible approach to personalized marketing through an example of a sports apparel e-commerce site:

### DATA

This stage is about identifying the key attributes of your consumer that you want to track. For example, as an e-commerce site, the focus is to convert every prospect to a visitor

and then eventually from visitor to purchaser. This identification or "traits" are important, as these data points help in knowing more about the user's intent and then segmenting users into the right groups. Bottom line is that with the amount of big data available, marketers can use it to their advantage to purposely inform targeting by creating useful microsegments.

### DESIGN

With key identified microsegments comes the need to create relevant messages that are aligned to the need state of a user. For example, if you know that this group of users has browsed a particular section of your site (like baseball equipment), you know that the only creative that would resonate the most to this audience is about baseball. This is where you can apply a customized site experience or media ad for this group, including a personalized call to action.

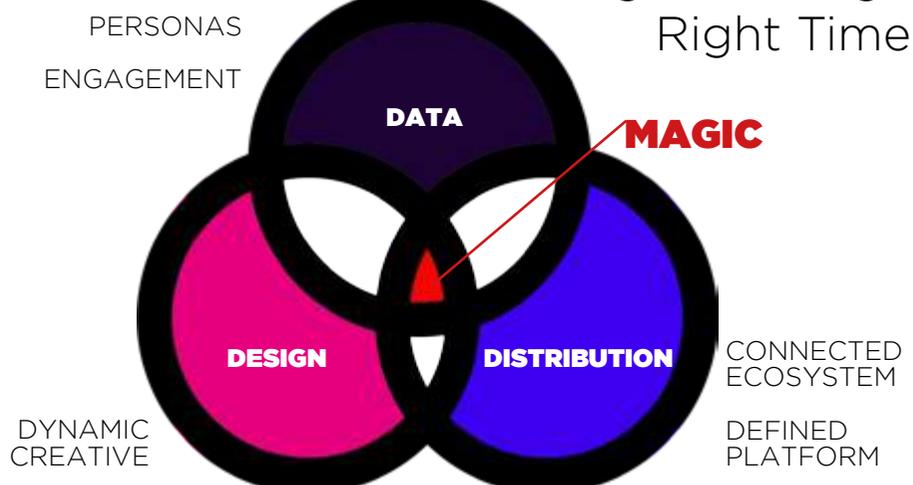
### DISTRIBUTE

Once you have dynamic creative optimized for a particular segment, another challenge is placing the marketing messaging in right context. This means deciding how to serve a tennis creative to potential prospects when they are looking for tennis news. In today's marketing world, the right placement is fundamental to success as much as the right creative. If you focus on the intent of the consumer, it provides a direction for you to place the message at a relevant place. We have seen examples where when users go to a sports news site after a big game win, they see offers to buy apparel/gear featuring the hero of that game. This is where you can take design and distribute to scale in a contextual manner to drive impulse behavior.

In the end, by leveraging marketing technologies, brands that extend digital media targeting beyond consumer demographics and focus on the "intent" of the consumer will see higher results.

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Right Person,  
Right Message,  
Right Time.



# Additional Author Bios

Cyndi W. Greenglass is a founding partner and senior vice president of strategic solutions at Diamond Marketing Solutions, a \$100M data-driven communications company. Cyndi is a member of the executive management team, where she manages the strategic planning process and participates in strategic acquisitions. Cyndi was named into the Top 100 Influential BTB Marketers by Crain's B@B Magazine twice and is the 2012 CADM Chicago Direct Marketer of the Year. She is an adjunct instructor at both Aurora University and WWU and lectures on data-driven marketing strategies nationally.

"Telling a Memorable Story with Your Data"  
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Abhishek Jadon leads content and data strategy for Gatorade. In this role, he is responsible for developing digital branded content that focuses on authentic storytelling and for the implementation of marketing technologies to drive media optimization and content personalization at scale. He brings 11-plus years of experience in executing digital campaigns, conceptualizing digital strategy and leveraging technological trends at leading CPG companies, including Pepsi, Kraft and Cadbury. He provides a unique perspective informed by a global mindset developed through an international exposure of living and working in four different countries along with roles within cross-functional teams.

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Amanda Slavin is a millennial and Generation Z expert and the CEO/founder of CatalystCreativ, an experience studio focused on helping cities, brands and institutions flourish by developing educational and inspirational strategy, along with on and offline campaigns to engage millennials. Amanda and CatalystCreativ have worked with brands spanning from NPR, Dell, Ekocycle and Starwood Hotels. Amanda was listed on last year's Forbes 30 Under 30 for marketing and advertising. She is a founding advisory board member for NPR's millennial arm, GenListen, and an advisor to Mama Hope and I Am That Girl.

"Decoding the Millennial Enigma"  
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## Spiegel Research Center

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Ewa Maslowska is a post-doctoral research associate of the Medill IMC Spiegel Digital & Database Research Center. She earned her Ph.D. in the persuasive communication program in the Amsterdam School of Communication Research at University of Amsterdam. Her dissertation explored how personalized marketing communication influences consumers.

Tom Collinger is the executive director of the Spiegel Digital & Database Research Center; senior director of the Medill Distance Learning Initiative; and an associate professor at Medill. He is a widely recognized expert and speaker in the areas of integrated marketing communications; direct, database and e-commerce marketing management; customer loyalty; customer relationship management; and channel integration.

Edward C. Malthouse is the research director of the Spiegel Digital & Database Research Center and the Theodore R. and Annie Laurie Sills Professor of Integrated Marketing Communications at Medill. He is an expert in applied statistics, market research and media marketing. His research focuses on the intersection of consumers' experience with media, customer value, marketing strategies and interactive marketing technologies.

Yorgos (George) Askalidis is a doctoral student in the Computer Science Theory group at Northwestern University. He received his B.S. and M.S. in mathematics from the University of Athens. His research revolves around online user-generated reviews. His area of focus is around the relationship between reviews, biases and usefulness of information to potential buyers.

Vijay Viswanathan is an assistant professor in the Medill School of Journalism in media and integrated marketing communications, and a research associate of the Spiegel Digital & Database Research Center. His research interests include media choice and multitasking, brand management, consumer psychology, marketing strategy and marketing mix models.

Chinye Osamusali is the data visual director for the Spiegel Research Center impact marketing team and a full-time student in the Medill Integrated Marketing Communications program. Prior to her enrollment at Northwestern, she worked for a year at SAP doing field marketing and earned her B.A. in english rhetoric and professional writing from University of Waterloo in Canada.