

Customer Experience Martech

Face the future: Move from promotion to prediction

A guide to creating intelligent customer experiences with connected martech



Executive summary

Get the most value from your martech stack and deliver better customer experiences by using it to capture, organize, and put the right data to work at the right time and place in your customers' time of need.



Step 1:

Address business needs by evaluating and integrating key customer data

Step 2:

Learn more about your customers, faster, through accelerated data analysis

Step 3:

Create and connect personalized experiences across channels by applying insights

Step 4:

Experiment with machine learning and AI-driven customer experiences

As the pace of digital innovation accelerates, interest in using AI and machine learning for the enterprise continues to build. If integrated thoughtfully into a modern marketing technology stack, these advanced technologies have the potential to accelerate internal processes, reduce manual guesswork, and even improve aspects of the customer experience.

But **the reality check** is that two-thirds of marketing leaders believe their organizations are still not very mature when it comes to understanding the customer experience, personalization, and data analytics.¹ That means enabling technologies like AI and automation are a long way away for most. In fact, 86% of enterprises believe AI and machine learning are necessities for the organization, but 79% have yet to adopt them.²

Follow these steps to get more value from your martech stack today for more intelligent customer experiences tomorrow.

¹ "Connect your martech to connect with your customers", Avanade and Sitecore, June 2018

² Ibid.

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Step 1: Address business needs by evaluating and integrating key customer data

Data sits at the heart of every great customer experience.

Whether you're trying to understand your customers, identify new opportunities, or prepare for AI, all roads lead back to data. Every technology, channel, and customer interaction relies on it to perform key roles in customer experience.

If your martech stack doesn't help you identify and collect the data you need to solve business problems, it's time to evaluate or improve it.

What's the current state of your customer data?

My data is (check all that apply):

- Accessible** I can access the data I need to answer priority business hypotheses (e.g., a business-centered KPI scorecard).
- Governed** My data is clean, formally managed, compliant with regulations like GDPR, and accounted for across the customer engagement lifecycle.
- Integrated** I can integrate third-party (e.g., social, CRM) data to answer my hypotheses, and my data and systems connect so that information flows across depositories and channels.
- Tracked** I have a data tagging or tracking strategy across paid, owned, and earned channels.
- Collapsible** I can boil down all my data sources, systems, reports, and departments into what my organization agrees is a "single source of truth."

Is your C-suite aligned on the data necessary to achieve a great customer experience? Find out and ensure that data is available across the organization. Sometimes martech only takes some fine-tuning to extract these values—but left unattended, it can leave you lagging behind your competitors.

Get started:

To spend less time overseeing data and more time using it to generate revenue, depend on credentialed data scientists to improve your data quality and connectivity across the broader business.

Case study: Steered by data

A leading car manufacturer wanted to make loyal customers feel important. We delivered the content and management needed to identify these customers and find out more about them, including their date of birth.

Using this data, the brand gave each customer a redeemable local gift for their birthday—and a complimentary ride in the manufacturer's cars. This memorable personal experience helped the brand endear itself to high-value customers, and differentiate itself from competitors.

Step 2: Learn more about your customers, faster, through accelerated data analysis

You can collect data—the right data—so ensure your martech helps you understand it.

Not all customers are created equal

Insights inform where to maximize effort. Conduct a customer value assessment to help prioritize activities, keeping an open mind: A segment that generates initial revenue could drive excessive service calls or product returns that cost more in the long run. Pairing intel with martech that helps you track customer journeys in near-real time can reveal insights faster.

Confirm the behaviors to watch

With martech that helps you track personas and behaviors, you can better steer the experience. B2Cs may evaluate navigation and buying trends

over time to identify when products resonate throughout the customer lifecycle. B2Bs may want to map journeys from traffic sources to on-site behaviors like abandonment, pinpointing which paid ads need improvement or partner sites need more support.

Listen up

Consider a listening, feedback, and real-time conversation strategy to capture visitor sentiments and preferences. Modern martech plugs in to structured and unstructured data across channels and helps you extract meaning from a high volume of visitors. Identify obstacles to conversion and frictions that disenchant your best customers. Don't forget: Your customers will expect you to be proactive, so start engaging in two-way, real-time conversations (see Step 4).

How clear is your customer view?

My customer view is (mark the best fit):

	Limited	Moderate	
Useful: I understand my customers' behaviors in ways that answer my business hypotheses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timely: I can evaluate interactions in near-real time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Traceable: I can tag and track persona behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Categorized: I can identify key engagement triggers (e.g., sales, buying, marketing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open: I can map journeys across platforms and channels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Get started:

Don't be alarmed if you feel behind; these levels of customer understanding become increasingly difficult to achieve. Connect with seasoned data scientists and analytics professionals who use data to solve big business problems across industries.

Step 3: Create and connect personalized experiences across channels by applying insights

Use triggers to launch personalized elements that best fit a given persona, target, or segment.

Strategically accelerate results

Using a CMS with built-in personalization makes this process easier and can shorten your sales lifecycle. For example, if you can define and track personas within your digital experiences, create a personalized customer journey map that moves top customers past the homepage and directly to the most relevant offer or product for them. A quick and intuitive buying experience is key for driving conversions in commerce scenarios.

Share benefits across the business

It's important to share personalization data and results across the organization, especially where client experience strategies are measured. The sales team may better be able to react to buying

behaviors, marketing can optimize content based on engagement, and business groups can evaluate ROI. Set up regular reports or debrief sessions to keep everyone in the know.

Connect moments across channels

Modern brand experiences extend beyond desktop to mobile, in-store kiosk, IoT, and more. Can your martech power personalized experiences across the channels that your customers care about? Investigate if your content platform offers decoupled, or "headless" CMS architecture, enabling you to innovate with various front-end experiences across different APIs, suppliers, and systems.

Does your martech help you prepare for personalization? (Circle yes or no)

Yes	No	I already have established personas, client segments, and/or journey maps.
Yes	No	I can easily connect my content with my experiences.
Yes	No	I can ensure consistency across traditional and modern channels.
Yes	No	My personalization tools are intuitive for marketers/business users.
Yes	No	My systems integrate for intelligent personalization automation.

Get started:

Content production, persona mapping, testing, and more will factor in to your personalization strategy. If you, like 70% of IT executives we recently surveyed, don't have the necessary skills in house³, partner with experienced digital strategists to help.

³ Ibid.

Case study: More-natural nurturing

We worked with a well-known baby products manufacturer to connect disparate martech systems and provide great customer experiences throughout their lifecycle. The company's platform retained customers' registration data and used it to nurture them through each stage of pregnancy. As the customers' infants grew, the brand's content changed with them, based on relevant products and previous transactions.

The company extended the personalized customer experience with local smart vending machines so parents could buy what they needed, 24/7.

Step 4: Experiment with machine learning and AI-driven customer experiences

Reduce manual workloads while helping customers find what they need.

Go back to your core business problems and data insights. How do you plan to interact with your customers to address the solution? They are probably looking for something. Experiment with basic intelligent technologies to improve their search experience.

Speed up search with machine learning

Machine learning (ML) for search is a good place to start. Most customers know what they're looking for when they come to you, so give them a fast and easy search experience. A more-immediately gratifying customer experience means greater satisfaction and lower abandonment rates. And ML can be implemented quickly; many high-performing services and technologies can plug in to your modern CMS today.

ML uses visitor analytics to predict and deliver relevant search results, and even proactively offer content based on the user.

Design enlightening AI conversations

More advanced—but increasingly common—is the use of AI-powered chatbots. To accelerate sales or cut down on traditional customer service costs, chatbots synchronize natural language processing (NLP) and key words with account data and other relevant brand information to answer customer inquiries 24/7. A trusted partner can help you:

- Determine the purpose and customer use case(s) for the chatbots—again, tied back to your initial business needs—ensuring the relevant data is available and accessible
- Think of and design your intelligent chatbot conversations so they feel natural and relevant while driving business outcomes
- Integrate the right platform or code-based framework to streamline integration into your martech stack

Step 4:

Near term:

Let the tech do the heavy lifting to make this experience accurate, efficient, and personal.

Long term:

Use chatbot-customer conversation data to inform your ongoing strategy.

Get started:

Plan to acquire or outsource the modern skills necessary to launch, connect, and maintain these new services all while considering future ethics concerns and governance.

People before robots

These technologies require substantial time and resource investment. So it's critical at the onset to get the right stakeholders aligned on experience and business expectations. The C-suite should keep the customer first and your core business problem(s) in focus.



Why Avanade and Sitecore?

A connected martech can support business needs, overcome regulatory challenges, increase efficiencies, drive customer brand affinity, and generate revenues—but it's hard to get it right.

Between Sitecore's advanced platform and Avanade's global business expertise, we've helped 250-plus enterprises accelerate their marketing technology engines to power results-driven and award-winning customer experiences. This means that no matter where you are on the path to personalization and artificial intelligence, we can help you connect and get more value from your martech stack to take your customer experience to the next level.

We'll help you lift

Our agile team is made up of business strategists, data scientists, and creative technologists who will



Build your connected martech stack with the future in mind



Integrate data to build experiences that drive desired commerce outcomes



Make your martech more intuitive and easier for marketers to use



Develop a strategic roadmap—from the points of innovation to anticipated ROI



Understand your consumers through analytics and data science



Augment and modernize existing team skills for today's digital landscape



Deliver connected content through relevant, personalized experiences



Facilitate change enablement and cross-functional collaboration to adopt the use of intelligent technologies

Contact us

To learn more about how we can help you build a better customer experience by maximizing results from your martech stack, ask about one of our CX workshops.

www.avanade.com DigitalCustomer

About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud-enabling services, business solutions and design-led experiences, delivered through the power of people and the Microsoft ecosystem. Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation and has 30,000 professionals in 24 countries.

Visit us at www.avanade.com

About Sitecore

Sitecore is the global leader in experience management software that combines content management, commerce, and customer insights. The Sitecore Experience Cloud™ empowers marketers to deliver personalized content in real time and at scale across every channel – before, during, and after a sale. More than 5,200 brands – including American Express, Carnival Cruise Lines, Dow Chemical, and L'Oréal – have trusted Sitecore to deliver the personalized interactions that delight audiences, build loyalty, and drive revenue.

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