Guide

The new digital marketing opportunity for retail and brands

Level up your customer engagement with lifecycle-based personalisation

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As a leader of a successful and growing brand, you'll be well aware of the central role personalisation plays in attracting and retaining customers in your highly competitive, trend-led market. But knowing about personalisation isn't the same as executing it effectively and hitting business targets through personalised campaigns.

For more information, please contact: info@xpedition.co.uk | +44 (0)20 7121 4705 | www.xpedition.co.uk
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Use digital personalisation to fulfill business needs?

How do you grow your customer base, increase sales and keep your brand front of mind?

One key factor is building the customer's life cycle position into your personalisation strategy, so their digital experience mimics all the best things about the equivalent physical experience. Another is making sure you can deliver on the promises of your personalised campaigns, so customers enjoy a consistent and excellent experience at every point.

In this guide, we share insights from **Felix Kruth,** *Product Director* at **Voyado,** and **Phil Bacon,** *Senior ERP Consultant* at **Xpedition.**

How are retailers working with personalisation today?

Once, personalisation in retail simply meant adding personalised fields in customer communications. Everyone received the same email, but at least it addressed each recipient by name.

Many brands now take personalisation a step further by using customer segmentation to target their messages to the right people. Using customer analytics, they can offer **tailored product recommendations.** That's a good place to start... but it's not enough.

> "Personalisation is more than just making product recommendations in email communications. Old-style tools can detect that the customer looked at jackets and send them recommendations for more jackets. Advanced algorithms are used in these tools, but this doesn't always result in an experience the customer wants. What if they've already bought a jacket? More suggestions could be annoying. What if they're just about to leave your site to browse for hats and gloves elsewhere? You need a smarter approach."
>
> — Felix Kruth

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What's changed since the pandemic?

During and since the Covid pandemic, shoppers are turning to online channels more and more. Voyado's latest index report shows that in 2021, **customers are shopping online 35% more frequently compared to 2020.** And their expectations are high: they anticipate a personalised experience that's similar to the one they'd enjoy in store when browsing and shopping naturally.

That's why it's essential that brands now address personalisation shortcomings caused by inadequate software tools and algorithms.

> "We've talked to many businesses who believed their approach to online personalisation was strong, but have discovered that it's below the expected standard in the current market. They've failed to create a strong and consistent personal connection when customers are buying goods online."
>
> — Phil Bacon

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What is lifecycle-based personalisation?

The customer lifecycle embraces every stage of a consumer's relationship with you - from first discovering your brand to making purchases, then potentially moving away from your brand. It includes every interaction, touchpoint and choice that happens in between.

You need your brand to be personal and relevant consistently, at every one of these moments. You need to welcome the customer appropriately when they first make a purchase or enter your loyalty programme. You need to deliver promptly and accurately with good communication throughout, then follow up after the purchase.

There's a **massive opportunity here for brands to level up their personalisation game.** Instead of just using algorithms to analyse what kind of product a customer might like based on browsing and purchase history, you can engage with the customer in real time at every point on their journey.

Create a digital experience that's as good as in-store

When customers are in your stores, service and communication is geared towards making them feel good, whatever they're doing. The same applies in a digital experience. How do you want customers to feel when they make their first purchase, come back for repeat purchases and even when something isn't right?

"An effective personalisation strategy adds value when the customer purchases for the first time, returns an item, contacts customer service or simply follows the retailer on Instagram. It focuses on how the customer would ideally like to feel after taking any of these actions. For example, apologising if an item is out of stock and suggesting an alternative or giving an estimate of when it will be available. These personal interactions become closer to the way personalisation works in a store. It mimics the relationship aspect."

— Felix Kruth

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Shopping is more than just a purchase

Another key point is that personalised experiences don't just revolve around purchases. It's not enough to map out alternative customer journey paths to the checkout. For consumers, shopping is much more than the actual transaction, particularly for fashion and lifestyle brands. **It's about an entire experience and what individuals feel about it.**

If you can integrate your customer service platform with your personalisation platform, you can see a broader picture of the customer. For example, you could offer faster delivery and premium service to your best customers. A loyal customer in-store would be recognised and treated with extra care if they visited with a product issue. The approach and the experience both need to be the same online.

Data is essential to succeed with life-cycle personalisation

Maintaining visibility of customer engagement across channels means managing complex data flows. **It's vital that retailers have one accurate and up-to-date source of data.** Xpedition provides this capability to Voyado's market-leading personalisation platform, creating access to relevant, consistent data from every channel. Phil Bacon says, '

"We provide one version of the data for omnichannel organisations, which enables marketing departments to be smarter and make full and impactful use of advanced personalisation through Voyado."

There are challenges around accruing and consolidating customer data, as stringent privacy legislation continues to evolve. The latest e-privacy rules shorten cookie lifespans and require browser data to be forgotten more quickly. Forward-thinking retailers have identified an opportunity from this: **it creates an impetus to invest in more sophisticated and future-focused personalisation platforms that are truly customer-centric.** There's a real opportunity to differentiate from competitors with digital personalisation that responds to the customer's latest interactions and behaviours.

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Personalised experiences are fuelled by robust processes and insights

Creating a highly personalised digital customer experience doesn't happen in a vacuum. Your business management system underpins the end-to-end approach. You need to deliver on your personalised promises through fulfilment, delivery and stock availability.

"You need good data and processes to fuel personalisation, so you can be sure of maximising campaign ROI and delivering an excellent experience from end to end. That includes checking the profitability of personalised promotions and making sure your stock and supply chain are always attuned to changing demand."

— Phil Bacon

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Summary:

Take the lead in retail and fashion with personalisation

Effective personalisation means defining the digital customer experience by **identifying how you want your customer to feel at every touchpoint.** It's time to shift your focus from conversion-based goals and adopt a more customer-centric strategy.

Leading e-commerce businesses have already spotted the importance of this, appointing Chief Customer Officers with a mission to focus on the relationship between their brand and their customers.

Success and sales results come from finding a way of giving the customer what they want and deserve at every point in their lifecycle with your brand. With a leading personalisation platform supported by accurate, integrated data, **there's a big opportunity to establish a customer loyalty advantage in the ever-growing field of e-commerce.** This technology is effective and affordable for smaller and mid-sized firms just as much as for global giants.

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About:

VOYADO

Voyado is the leading Customer Experience Platform (CXP) for e-commerce players and retailers in the Nordics, now expanding into the UK, providing actionable customer insights and tools for razor-sharp and personalized customer communications. Through integrated AI, Voyado is the ultimate customer retention platform — already helping e-commerce players and retailers **reach over 100 million end consumers.** Together with investors Verdane and Novax, Voyado is growing more rapidly than ever — making more brands easy to love by the minute!

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Xpedition

Xpedition offers Fashion and Retail customers **an end-to-end, fully integrated business management solution,** powered by Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central and a range of complementary fashion-focused applications. With tailor-made functionality to meet the specific needs of the industry and third-party integrations across multiple channels, our all-in-one Fashion and Retail ERP enables you to connect data across your business functions and drive business growth.

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