



4 Simpler Ways To Make Your Web Content More “Personalized”

Delivering personalized customer journeys is one of the biggest challenges facing marketers today. But does it really need to be? Here are some quick tips on how you can transform your content from ordinary into true, one-to-one experiences for your customers.



Get To Know Your Audience

The truth is, in order to actually personalize content for customers, you need to know who they are first. This goes beyond the superficial: name, email, company, and whatever else you would need to plug them into your CRM. Rather, you need to know them. Who they are, what they like, what they are interested in. To do that, you need to build an ecosystem around finding that information and compiling it.

The key here is **customer data**. That is, the data a customer gives you whenever they engage with you. It could be on your website, on social media, on your digital app or via email. With today’s technology, it can also include real-life activities such as visits to a retail store or restaurant, a doctor appointment, or attending a conference or show. Every interaction is a chance to accumulate customer data, which in turn is another opportunity to gain a fuller picture of your customer.

This data can best be broken out into three types: behavioral, socio-demographic, and contextual.

Behavioral data is exactly what it sounds like. What is the customer telling you about themselves, based on their actions. This covers their activity while engaging with your content and your brand. How long do they stay on pages, what do they click on, and what influences each action they take.

Socio-demographic data is the nitty-gritty details about the customer themselves. Age, sex, ethnicity, their employer and job title. This is typically data provided to you directly by the customer, either by filling out forms, surveys, or other pieces of content. This data may also come from a 3rd party data provider.

Contextual data is the most complex of the three, and instead provides an overhead view of all the factors that influence a customer’s actions. For instance, are customers more engaged with content

at certain hours of the day? Or are specific channels leading to higher engagement over others for individual pieces of content? Each piece of context gives a fuller picture of understanding to all the pieces of data you collect.

Understanding customer data is one thing, but you also need to **manage** this data so it can be used for personalization. Technologies like Customer Data Platforms (CDPs) are specifically designed to capture all these kinds of data and provide detailed analysis on it to create actionable next steps for things such as personalization. Digital Experience Platforms (DXPs) also specialize in providing end-to-end customer data management and application for personalization.



Build User Profiles & Segment

So you have a whole bunch of customer data accrued and compiled from a slew of different visitors. Now what do you do with it?

The answer, of course, lies in building profiles and segmentation.

Think of personalization like a large umbrella. While each customer should have a truly individual experience, it's also true that many customers tend to have overlapping interests, needs, and backgrounds. Like not getting rained on. Your goal isn't necessarily to build out millions of different umbrellas specific to each customer, but rather to understand the overlap and try to create numerous pieces of personalization that, together, give that unique experience the customer craves.

The first step is building out profiles. This is where you take all the compiled data you have on a specific customer and let it take shape. Each piece of data should give a larger picture of the customer themselves, and you can then mark attributes and assign values to each attribute. A DXP can do all of this automatically if parameters are set ahead of time.

Once you set up a user profile, you can then use those same attributes to segment it out across your systems. Back to the umbrella example, you're not looking to stuff them under one large umbrella or under a small, personalized one. Rather, each attribute allows them to be segmented according to values you set ahead of time, essentially meaning they could potentially fall under dozens of different umbrellas that all serve to speak to different pieces of their profile.





Give 'Em What They Want

Segmentation is especially important because personalization doesn't happen in a vacuum. You don't look at a customer, identify their individual needs, and build personalized content accordingly. Rather, personalization is set according to larger segments that have shown interest in a particular kind of content or have a specific need/want.

The good thing is, if you have those segments identified and organized, you can finally start *personalizing* your content for them!

Giving your customers what they want is a pretty simple idea, but in personalization it goes a bit deeper. Content personalization isn't just a matter of a webpage shifting its language according to which pre-selected persona is viewing it. You're dealing with a number of different, potentially overlapping segments here. Content personalization goes down to the individual level, by taking account of what the content is, who it speaks to, and helping it speak to as many segments as you can. And on any single page, you could be dealing with dozens upon dozens of individual content pieces – it can be quite complicated to manage!

Luckily, a solution like a DXP is quite adept at helping users manage these various personalizations. The key is a unified user interface – if a marketer has one source to manage every personalized piece of content, edit them when needed (ideally in real-time), and then publish and analyze the results, it becomes much less of a hassle to ensure you're giving each customer exactly what they want.



Analyze, Test, and Improve

The biggest thing to remember with personalization is that nothing is perfect nor truly evergreen – your customers and their needs are constantly changing based on market pressure, new technology, and, well, life. Although you may have set up your personalizations and have them humming, you can always make them better.

This is where the concept of data analysis comes into place. As your customers engage with your content, they will naturally react to it, similarly to how they did to your content before. Things like click rates, average time on page, and session length, amongst many others, give a glimpse into how effective (or ineffective) your personalized content is across a segment. From this data, you can glean opportunities for improvement.

This is where testing can really make the difference. There's A/B Testing, of course, but where complex personalization tools like DXPs shine is with things like multi-variant testing, wherein you can test more than 2 versions at a time. You can also do this testing in real-time, allowing you to gain up-to-the-minute analysis on how your content is doing and allow you to make changes on the fly.

The other big benefit for testing is that it will often open up new avenues for targeting customers. A decrease in engagement over time can often indicate that your segments are out-of-date or that their interests have shifted. Keeping track of these changes in engagement, allows you to subsequently go back into your segments and further refine them.

Remember that effective personalization is a marathon, not a sprint. Although you might hope that gathering data, building segments, and launching personalizations will work right away, it often takes a long time to get them exactly right, and they will always need to be refined over time. The key is to focus on incremental improvement and give yourself and your team the opportunity to experiment and grow throughout the process. If you manage it right, you'll create a personalization engine that is truly built to stand the test of time.

Ready To Personalize?

Jahia's award-winning DXP is built to help organizations just like yours leverage their content and data to deliver personalized digital experiences to their customers.

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