Webflow

The marketer's guide to website personalization

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Today's buyers have high expectations for the website experience.

78%

of B2B buyers expect companies to adapt their experiences to their changing needs and preferences

Thanks to B2C personalization pioneers like Amazon and Netflix, buyers and customers alike expect companies to build streamlined experiences that meet them where they are. In fact, Salesforce found that 78% of B2B buyers expect companies to adapt their experiences[1] to their changing needs and preferences.

But while buyers have clearly shown that they've moved on from the generic past, many companies are still stuck in their old ways. In the same Salesforce report, a whopping 85% of B2B buyers stated that customer experiences should be better given all the data that they know today's companies collect about them.

This disconnect means that B2B companies are often disappointing their website visitors and leaving money on the table for their competitors to profit off. According to a report by McKinsey[2], the fastest-growing companies drive 40% more of their revenue from personalization than their slower-growing counterparts.

All of this goes to show that if B2B companies don't get with the times, they'll inevitably be left behind.

Fortunately, it's never been easier to get started with website personalization. This ebook will outline how to develop and implement a successful website personalization strategy that drives conversions and increases revenue.

Ready to throw out the old, and bring in the new? Let's go!

1 State of the Connected Customer Report
 Salesforce

2 The value of getting personalization right—
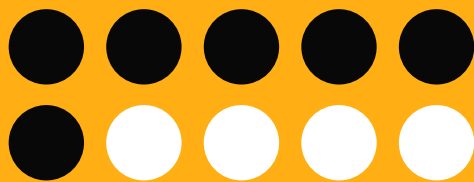 or wrong—is multiplying McKinsey

The 3 golden rules of personalization

Guidelines to providing exceptional website experiences

Whether it's on your website, in your emails, or elsewhere, good personalization always requires data. But, as with all things data-related, there's a fine line between effective and invasive.

Twilio Segment found that only 51% of consumers[3] today trust brands to keep their personal data secure and use it responsibly. And consumers have proven that an irresponsible use of data comes at a high price: A SmarterHQ report found that 63% of consumers said they would stop purchasing products and services from companies that take "creepy" marketing too far.

This is why the key to doing personalization successfully is to find the right balance between personalization and privacy. To help you find that equilibrium, we've developed three rules marketers should always keep in mind:

6 in 10

consumers said they would stop purchasing products and services from companies that take 'creepy' marketing too far.[4]

3 The State of Personalization 2023
  Twilio Segment

4 Privacy and Personalization
  Smarter HQ

1. Don't be invasive.

If you were meeting someone for the first time in person, you wouldn't blurt out their name and job title before they offered that information. The same applies to buyers on your website. You don't need to flaunt all of the data you have — so don't use names or personal details unless they add value to your messaging, especially on someone's first visit.

2. Keep personalization relevant, useful, and helpful.

With your messaging, focus on showing your understanding of the buyer and how you can solve their unique pain points. By providing value-driven messaging, you can ensure that your brand will resonate with the buyer instead of scaring them off.

3. Treat customers like humans and engage in conversations.

Remember that at the end of the day, even with B2B buyers, you're dealing with a human on the other side of the screen. And as humans, we want to build authentic connections.

That's why it's important to have real conversations with your buyers. Instead of forcing one-sided conversations where you ask a long list of questions, act as a trusted advisor. This means you should ask genuine questions, take the buyer's inputs into account, and guide them to the information that will be most useful to them.

By keeping these three rules top of mind, you'll be able to create a personalized website experience that genuinely helps all of your site visitors and keeps them engaged, no matter where they are in the buying journey.

How to segment your personalization strategy

Ways to think about audience segmentation

Every visitor to your website has their own reason for being there. Website personalization is all about adapting your website to match those individual needs for a faster and more relevant browsing experience.

To serve each visitor effectively, you need to have the right data available in order to gain a deep understanding of your buyers. Even with the right data in your pocket, your website personalization strategy may still fall short if you don't know how to use that data to personalize both efficiently and effectively. And that's where segmentation comes in.

Segmentation refers to the practice of breaking your audience into specific groups of people who share similar needs and interests, which you can then use to build personalized website experiences at scale. Next, we'll cover four of the most effective ways to segment your website audience.

1. Firmographic segmentation

According to DemandGen, when B2B buyers are making a purchase decision, 63% lean towards companies that provide easy access to relevant content that speaks directly to their company.[5]

Firmographic data, like a company's industry, size, and revenue, gives you valuable insight into who your website visitors are so that you can serve up these relevant experiences. By connecting your marketing automation, CRM, and ABM solutions to your personalization tools, you can build these experiences based on any firmographic parameters you want to target.

For example, if your data shows that many successful customers are mid-sized fintech companies, you'll want to make sure that you have personalized content and offers for that segment. You might even want to have a personalized homepage with messaging that specifically acknowledges that industry's goals and pain points.

Examples of firmographic personalization on your website:

- Personalize your homepage messaging so that it speaks to industry needs

- Surface different resources for department personas

- Show personalized offers that are targeted to a specific company size

5 2022 B2B Buyer Behavior Survey: Orgs Must Remain Agile As Buyers Conduct Self-Service, Anonymous Journeys DemandGen Report

Firmographic segmentation
in action

coupa

Coupa, a spend management platform, launched a
firmographic personalization program that targeted four
key verticals. The team started by combining data from
first- and third-party sources to ensure they had a robust
set of firmographic information. Once they had their
data sources, Coupa began creating industry-specific
versions of their homepage by personalizing the headline,
subheadline, logos, images, and more. They even showed
multiple copy and image options within each vertical.

32%

lift in revenue from their
homepage

100%

lift in revenue from some
of their best experiments

2. Behavioral segmentation

Unlike firmographic segmentation, behavioral segmentation empowers you to tailor your website experience based on what your site visitors are telling you. This is because behavioral data tells you what a visitor is interested in based on their website activity.

Using behavioral data, you can provide personalization based on actions such as how much time was spent on your site, which links were clicked, and which blog posts were read. In doing this, you're no longer guessing what your visitors want — instead, you're responding to what they're specifically looking for.

For example, if a visitor reads two blog posts that address the same pain point, you can use that information to trigger an offer that showcases your solution to that problem. And when that same visitor returns, you can highlight that pain point on your landing page. Research from McKinsey[6] shows that, for 66% of first-time buyers, it's important to them that brands tailor their messaging to their unique needs.

> **Examples of behavioral personalization on your website:**
>
> - Start a chatbot conversation if a visitor has spent more than a minute on a landing page
>
> - Customize your homepage to highlight specific pain points if a visitor reads a certain amount of blog posts on the topic
>
> - Show different headlines and calls to action (CTAs) to returning visitors vs. first-time visitors

6 The value of getting personalization right—
   or wrong—is multiplying McKinsey

3. Geographic segmentation

Contextual data is another important factor in personalization —
especially when it comes to where a site visitor is coming from.

A person's location can massively influence their needs and expectations
on your website. For example, if you're an insurance provider, you need to
consider that a company in California will have vastly different insurance
requirements than one in Michigan — and those differences are only
amplified if you're doing business on an international scale.

So, if you have offers that are location-specific, or you have a lot
of visitors from a variety of regions and countries, then geographic
personalization is critical.

By using geographic data to personalize your website, you can customize
your site language, content, and offers to that person's location. In doing
so, you create a website experience that feels familiar to the visitor, speaks
to their location specific needs, and helps drive more conversions.

**Examples of geographic personalization on
your website:**

- Personalize images on your homepage to reflect your
  visitor's location

- Customize the promotional offers or events displayed
  on your website based on your site visitor's location

- Use localization features to ensure visitors landing
  on your site from other countries are getting an
  experience in the language of that region

Geographic segmentation
in action

smaller earth

Although Smaller Earth Group, a company that offers cultural exchange programs, operates in more than 17 countries, they had previously had a custom, hard-coded website. This made it difficult to quickly launch localized site experiences to serve new territories without significant lead time and dedicated technical support. They enlisted the help of Webflow Enterprise's Localization capabilities to supercharge their speed to market and were able to launch in 11 locales in two months. This included spinning up the Spanish site in three hours, leveraging Webflow's AI-powered translation capabilities.

Now that their team is able to access, edit and update their localized sites with Webflow, they're positioned to serve both new and existing markets, empower their marketing teams to scale faster, and drive maximum business impact by quickly delivering more relevant versions of their site to visitors.

11 locales

launched in just three months

3 hours

to launch thier Spanish site

4. Account-based marketing (ABM)

No ebook about B2B personalization would be complete without mentioning ABM. Account-based marketing (ABM) is a strategy where you identify and engage your high-value accounts with dedicated marketing campaigns, be it one-to-one, one-to-few, or one-to-many. Think of it as advanced segmentation — by focusing your efforts on a specific company (or set of companies), you can deliver highly relevant messaging and content.

While, on paper, ABM sounds like it mostly involves VIP dinners and expensive direct mail gifts, your website also serves as an important extension of these campaigns. By using ABM personalization on your website, you can create an end-to-end experience that shows your accounts that you have a deep understanding of them and their pain points — which is what ABM is all about.

Though ABM takes up more time and resources than the other forms of segmentation we mentioned, it's worth the effort. ITSMA reports that 72% of B2B marketers say ABM provides higher return on investment (ROI) than other marketing techniques.

Examples of ABM on your website:

- Create custom landing pages that mention the target company by name and highlight their goals

- Incorporate any high-touch in person experiences or activations into your custom landing pages to create a sense of continuity across your brand

- Recommend case studies that align with the target account's pain points or industry when they're on your website

7 Momentum ITSMA's annual ABM
  Benchmarking study shows no signs of
  slow down for Account-Based Marketing
  Momentum itsma

Be sure to look beyond the hard data

As all of these segmentation strategies show, data is indispensable to personalization. But that doesn't mean that you should base your strategy on numbers alone. When deciding what forms of segmentation to use, you need to take into account both the data and the actual experience buyers go through when buying your product. So, collect qualitative data in addition to quantitative data. Talk to your customers and internal reps to get feedback on the current website experience and figure out what's working and what isn't. By gathering these insights, you'll be better equipped to focus on the areas of personalization that will drive the most impact.

How to prioritize your personalization program

What to consider when making decisions on personalization priorities

1. Look at your business goals

It's important to consider both long-term and short-term goals. Since your larger goals will take a lot of time and effort to achieve, break them down into smaller personalization goals where it's easier to realize success faster. This will build momentum and allow you to work towards more tangible results, then tackle more ambitious goals.

For example, if you want to go upmarket, you might roll out a personalized homepage for your enterprise buyers. Then, you can look at the number of meetings booked from that page to gauge the success of your personalization efforts. By focusing on these smaller, more specific goals, you can deploy your website personalization plan more strategically and pave the way towards reaching those big picture goals.

2. Find your high impact pages

When it comes to your website, not all pages are created equal. To optimize your efforts, look at which pages or offers are generating the most traffic and revenue. Usually, this includes your homepage, as well as high-intent pages like your pricing page, contact us page, or demo page. Starting with these pages is the most effective way to personalize the experience for as many people as possible. If you have a dedicated landing page for an email or ad campaign, be sure to include those in your classification of high impact pages.

3. Start wide, then narrow your focus

While ABM is an undeniably powerful strategy, you don't need to immediately dive into the deep end. Instead, start by personalizing for a larger audience. For example, you can start by choosing one of your target industries and building a dedicated landing page for them. By personalizing for a larger audience first instead of a single company, you will be able to learn the basics and get feedback faster so you can pinpoint which tactics work and which don't. Once you find what is resonating on a broader level, you can then start to narrow down to more in-depth, one-to-one personalization.

How to measure the effectiveness of website personalization

Maximizing the value of personalization efforts

Simply implementing a personalization strategy isn't enough. If you really want to reach your goals, you'll need to continuously monitor your programming to ensure it's working optimally. If a strategy isn't working, you can iterate on it or try something different altogether. And if a strategy is working, you can lean into it and drive more value from your efforts. So, how do you figure out if your website personalization is working as intended? There are two types of metrics that will tell you if your personalization campaigns are working: **engagement rates** and **conversion rates**. Here's more about each type of metric:

Engagement Rates

In the B2B selling cycle, it can take months to close a single deal. That's why it's important to look at a leading indicator, like engagement rates. These indicators can tell you early on if you're on the right track with your strategy — before you have any ways to measure your conversions.

To measure engagement rates, set a page-level goal based on how a visitor might interact with your website. Then, use a website analytics tool to track those interactions. you that the content is speaking to them and they're still thinking about your product.

Chapter 4
How to measure the
effectiveness of website
personalization

Here are some examples of what to look for:

Click-through rate:
This can tell you how many or how often people clicked a link to an offer, a video, or a CTA. The more clicks, the more engaging the content.

Average time on page:
The amount of time a visitor spends on your page is a strong sign of the content's effectiveness. Based on the goal of your page, you can set a time threshold (e.g. less than one minute or more than five minutes) to determine if the page is working.

Return views:
If a visitor comes back to a page multiple times, that tells you that the content is speaking to them and they're still thinking about your product.

Conversion rates

While high engagement rates are a great initial indication of success, a positive impact on conversions is what we're really after. But as we said, B2B companies have longer sales cycles, so you'll want to measure other conversions that will eventually lead to closed-won deals, like:

- Meetings booked

- Demos requested

- Marketing qualified leads (MQLs)

- Content downloads

If you're meeting your conversion rate goals, you'll know you're on the right track for meeting your larger business goals. You can also compare your conversion rate across different segments, pages, campaigns, or content to see what's working best.

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Continuous testing

Whether you deem your personalization campaign a success or a failure, you shouldn't stop after just one iteration. Instead, challenge yourself and your program through rounds of experimentation.

With website personalization, testing should be done widely and continually. Here's why:

1. **Website testing validates or disproves your assumptions.**

   It's the best way to quickly get feedback on what works and what doesn't.

2. **You can refine personalization down to the best options for a specific audience.**

   For example, you can start with a broad test and discover what type of headline works for a specific industry. Then, you can try several versions of the winning headline to optimize even further.

3. **What works right now may not work in three months.**

   The buyer landscape is always changing — from industry trends to purchasing habits. The only way to keep providing relevant personalization is to keep testing and staying on top of any trends or changing regulations in target industries.

   As with everything in personalization, it's best to test web pages and site elements that tie back to your broader business goals. Here are a few examples of elements you can test:

   - CTA language, color, and placement
   - Headlines
   - Web page copy
   - Layout
   - Header images
   - Video vs. text descriptions on a landing page

Accelerate website personalization with artificial intelligence

Scaling personalized consumer experiences

From initiating conversations to generating emails and analyzing large quantities of data, artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming the way B2B professionals work, making them more efficient and effective in nearly everything they do.

And website personalization is no exception. The 2023 State of Marketing AI report[8] by the Marketing AI Institute, found that more than half of the respondents (55%) see creating personalized consumer experiences at scale as a primary outcome they want to achieve with AI.

And already, AI is showing that it can be a game-changer for website personalization. With its ability to analyze data and make recommendations based on its interpretations and training, AI can empower companies to implement website personalization campaigns more effectively than ever — far faster and at a larger scale than a human could do.

55%

of respondents see creating personalized experiences at scale as a primary outcome they want to achieve with AI

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8 The Responsible AI Roadmap for Marketers
Salesloft

Power website optimization with AI

Although the benefits of testing and optimizing your website are clear, there's also no doubt that it can take up a lot of your time. And that's where AI can help.

AI website optimization tools like AI Optimize enable businesses to test thousands of page variations simultaneously. These tools allow you to tailor your website to each individual by quickly and continuously surfacing the best performing variations in that moment.

Since the AI uses a handful of variables to build unique pages for each site visitor, you're able to test hundreds — potentially even thousands — of different page combinations at the same time. This empowers you to scale up your optimization efforts to a level that a human couldn't imagine doing. The best part is that it's all automatic: The best part is that it's all automatic: AI immediately puts the best option into action to boost your conversions.

AI-powered website optimization in action

⚘ INDUSTRIOUS

With a business model that relied on buyers filling out a form on their website, coworking space provider Industrious understood how critical website optimization was to their success. Historically, Industrious ran a standard A/B testing program. However, they were feeling limited by the number of elements that they could test at any given time, and it was slow to show definitive results. Tasked with optimizing their most critical website pages, Industrious used Intellimize, a Webflow company, to easily set up AI-driven experiments on their homepage videos, imagery, and messages — without any coding. Within the first 90 days of using AI Optimize, Industrious saw an impressive 12% increase in lift on their primary goal, and in just two quarters, they drove $1.6M in value for their business.

12%
lift in lead goal

1.6M
In value in two quarters

Personalized websites are the way forward

Until very recently, B2B companies had no choice but to create impersonal and static website experiences. They knew they needed a website in order to be relevant, but they didn't have the technology to build anything more than a basic storefront.

But, in the last few years, everything has changed.

With all the time that buyers now spend online, a company's website has become an integral part of the buying experience. It's no longer just about having a digital storefront, but about offering a complete digital buying experience that caters to buyers' individual needs. It needs to feel as personal, authentic, and relevant as an in-person conversation.

Although personalization may feel like a big initiative to undertake, you'll be on the right track as long as you remember this: No matter what page, site element, or offer you're trying to personalize, always focus on what will be relevant and useful to your buyers.

Learn more today →

Join the community

Check out our discussion forums, learn more at Webflow University, follow us on social, or reach out at contact@webflow.com.