



Generative AI and the Intent-Driven Buyer's Journey

A research report by
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Executive Summary

Generative AI is transforming content marketing, but its true power lies beyond content creation — it's about understanding and acting on buyer intent in real-time. Traditional marketing has relied on inferred signals and predefined customer journeys, often failing to capture the dynamic and unpredictable nature of real buyer behavior.

Concierge AI agents now enable brands to engage buyers in open-ended, adaptive conversations, surfacing intent with high fidelity and delivering precisely the right content at the right moment. This shift is made possible by the seamless integration of data and content layers, where AI dynamically interprets user needs and personalizes responses at scale. The result is a buyer's journey that is no longer brand-directed but buyer-driven, optimizing engagement and business outcomes.

Here are four key takeaways.

1. ~~Attention~~ Intent Is All You Need: A Brief History

Marketing has evolved from analyzing basic digital behavior to leveraging zero-party data and advanced identity-matching to infer intent, yet true buyer needs remain largely a guessing game.

2. Concierge AI Agents Reveal and Fulfill High-Fidelity Intent

New AI-powered concierge agents enable real-time, dynamic conversations with buyers, eliminating the need for predefined content paths and revealing explicit buyer intent through direct dialogue.

3. Near Perfect Alignment to the Right Message at the Right Time

AI-driven buyer journeys adapt dynamically to individual needs, breaking free from rigid marketing funnels and ensuring content delivery aligns precisely with real-time buyer interest.

4. Enabling Concierge AI Agents: The Role of the Data and Content Layers

The synergy between the data layer (customer context, real-time insights) and the content layer (AI-generated personalized responses) powers concierge AI agents, creating a seamless and hyper-personalized buyer experience.

Attention Intent Is All You Need¹: A Brief History

Understanding intent is the Holy Grail of marketing. Over the past 25 years, we've developed ever more advanced ways to infer intent across digital touchpoints. At first, it was the primitive "digital body language" of observing the pages website visitors would view. Forms — often used to gate more valuable content assets such as reports and ebooks — captured more explicit intent information, albeit limited by how many form fields we could ask before it was abandoned. (The answer: not many.)

A whole generation of landing page and interactive content products then enabled marketers to create more path-oriented web experiences. Often matched with specific ad, email, or SEO campaigns — the source of the click was the first step on the path — these experiences invited users to make decision-tree-like choices, take quizzes or assessments, or use calculators or configurators to get insights and information that were best tailored to their needs. They were incentivized to answer truthfully in order to receive the most accurate and relevant results.

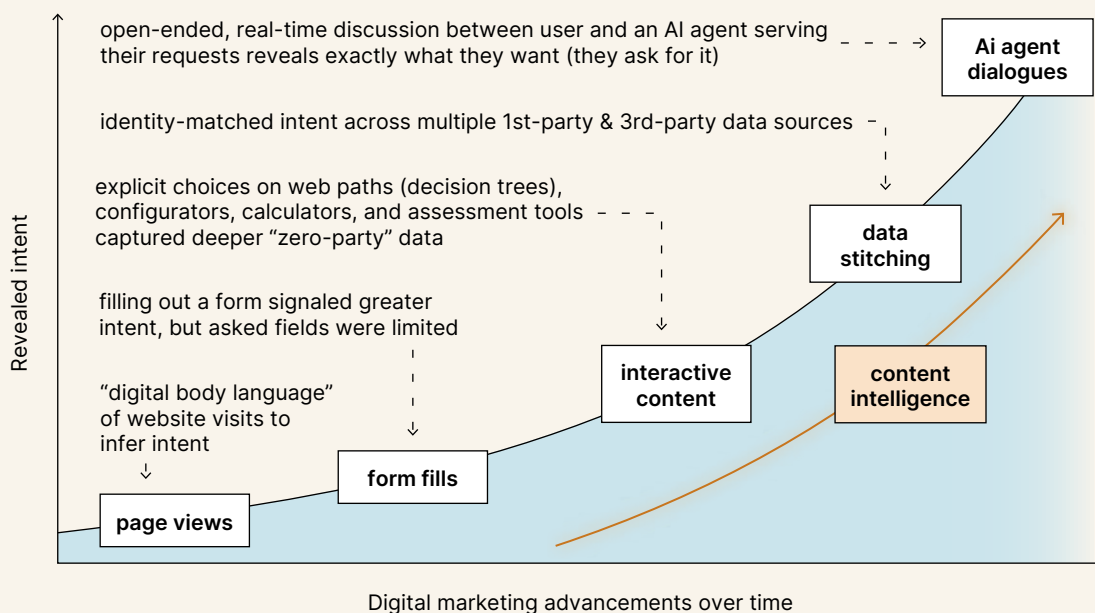
We have also recently seen the rise of a newer concept called "content intelligence." Content intelligence is a method that uses AI and analytics software to analyze content data. It provides insights into content performance, trends, and sentiment to help improve content strategy and distribution. It gives content marketers even deeper insights into how buyers are engaging with marketing assets, including which marketing assets they are engaging with, for how long and in what order. These content intelligence platforms can even show more detailed buyers journeys and identify buying groups that connect individual content engagement data with accounts to help inform sales about who to engage with and how to engage with them based on the content they have consumed.

In turn, these interactions and content intelligence provided marketers with much richer insights into the profiles and intent of the participants.

¹ A nod to the now famous *Attention Is All Your Need* research paper by Google in 2017 that launched the modern generative AI movement with generative pre-trained transformer (GPT) architectures.

This valuable information became known as “zero-party data” — data that the user explicitly shared with a seller. And the experience could then often satisfy that intent, at least the most immediate step of it. However, the range of these interactive content experiences were often constrained to paths that the marketer designed; they were typically not open-ended.

Evolution of Intent Capture and Content Intelligence



Source: chiefmartec

Over the past 10 years, there's also been considerable advancement in “data stitching” technologies to pull together third-party data from other sites and services that a user had engaged with and, using identity-matching algorithms, connect it with first-party data from across the full tech stack of the marketer's organization. This includes not just marketing-owned touchpoints, but product, sales, and customer service interactions, enabling marketers to infer even deeper intent of the buyers in their universe.

Combining intent data and engagement data gave us deeper insights, however, such inference is still a guess, albeit a more educated one, as to what the buyer is seeking and why. Can we ever *really* know exactly what a buyer wants? What if they could just tell us?

Concierge AI Agents Reveal and Fulfill High-Fidelity Intent

A new generation of AI agents, powered by the latest LLMs from OpenAI, Anthropic, Google, and Meta, are enabling an entirely new paradigm for revealing and serving buyer intent.

Vendors are moving quickly to fine tune and customize these LLMs for even greater accuracy and relevance by customizing the AI algorithms and optimizing them to work with specific data sets for individual customers.

We anticipate that AI agents will quickly be adopted to work with traditional engagement layers such as websites, personalized pages, and chatbots. These methods of serving up content to buyers are still riddled with challenges of marketers trying to guess what buyers want to see and hoping that buyers can navigate to the right content on the website or in a resource center. AI agents may also quickly begin to replace these more traditional engagement layers in the next several years as buyers get used to a much more personalized experience and true 1:1 engagement. While chatbots were a step towards true 1:1 personalized engagement, they still had some limitations.

Previous generations of website “chatbots” that existed before these LLMs were limited in the quality of interactions they could handle. They often frustrated visitors, directing them to engage with human chat operators, if they were available. But even human chat operators tended to follow scripts with limited response options that could leave buyers feeling unsatisfied and not really in the driver’s seat of their experience.

These new chatbot-style AI services, which we’ll call *concierge AI agents*, can deliver a dramatically improved experience. By combining the seamless conversational capabilities of LLMs with the rich knowledge base and full content library of the organization they’re operating within — and then personalizing the engagement for individual users based on any existing profile data in our customer data systems — these concierge agents can successfully answer a much wider range of buyer questions.

Instead of a monologue, where a brand serves content based on its own

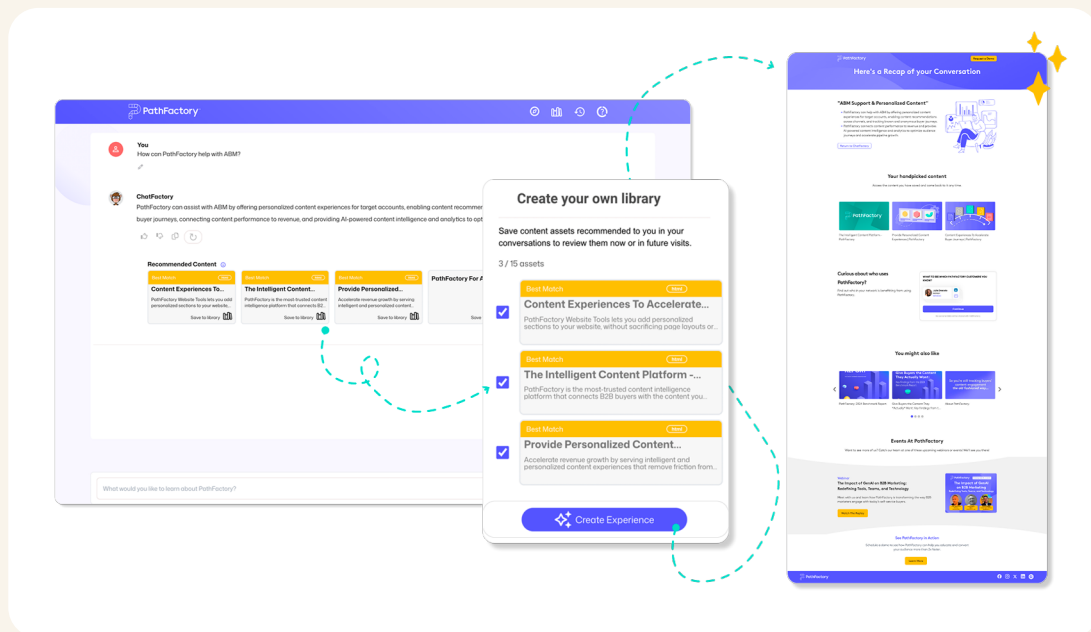
definition of the buyer's journey and what it *thinks* the buyer wants, concierge AI agents can engage buyers in a true *dialogue*.

As these agents answer questions, they can dynamically suggest follow-up topics or ideas for the buyer and recommend supporting content based on the conversation. It's like the Socratic method applied to the buyer's journey. But the buyer is not constrained to a fixed menu of next steps. They are fully in the driver's seat and can ask the agent to take an entirely different direction. If they're not happy with a particular response, they can explain that to the agent, clarify what they want, and the agent will eagerly adjust as requested.

Previously, content marketing touchpoints would often stop — at least temporarily — when the buyer received a significant piece of content. They would have to spend time consuming it and trying to map it to the specific questions in their head. It was all too easy for a buyer to drop out at that point, if they didn't figure out the answer they wanted. If and when they returned, time had passed, and the buyer's perception may have been altered by competing narratives.

This experience got slightly better with content intelligence where related content could be served up by the AI to help spark additional thoughts and engagement with the buyer, which lead to the ability for content intelligence platforms to begin to map buyers journeys through engagement with more than one piece of content. When agents are built on top of this type of content intelligence, they become even more powerful, by eliminating the guesswork.

In contrast, through an intelligent dialogue, concierge AI agents can help buyers get further along in their journey, faster, without interruption. While they can still serve up large and small content assets in their entirety for the buyer to review and share, they can also directly answer questions about the content for that buyer in the moment. Better yet, they can answer questions beyond that single piece of content, by synthesizing information from multiple different sources.



Source: PathFactory

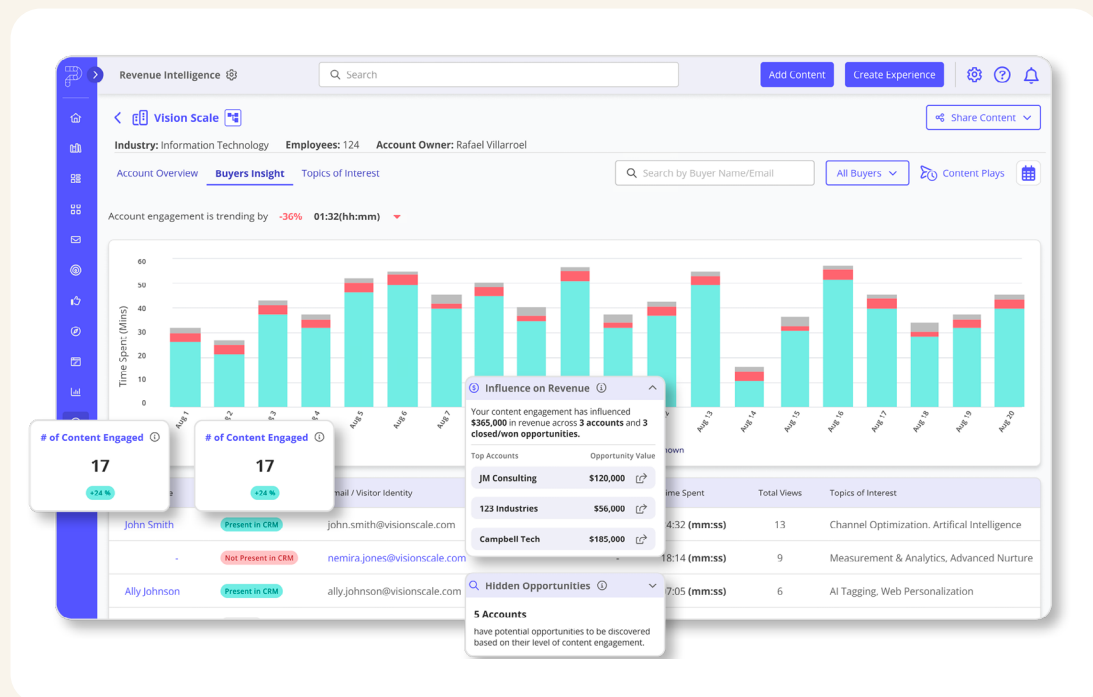
The key is that this dialogue is answering the buyer's exact questions, immediately, with no artificial stopping points until the buyer has satisfied their interest. The agent interprets what the buyer wants and fits its responses accordingly, instead of the buyer having to search, consume, and parse the brand's content, often over multiple touchpoints, to try to answer those questions on their own.

The translation between buyer questions and brand content is done by the agent. In the near future we anticipate that concierge AI agents will be able to extend the experience beyond multiple pieces of content, by using generative AI and open integration frameworks to create personalized web pages or custom demos based on the conversation or even connect buyers to other agents or applications to help them continue on their personalized journey.

This gives us the most direct line of sight into buyer intent possible. There's no need to guess at their intent. They explicitly express it through their dialogue with the agent. As with earlier forms of interactive content, buyers are incentivized to share their intent accurately because it results in them getting the right answers they seek.

Concierge AI agents successfully solicit true intent by fulfilling the objectives of the buyer.

But the value of that revealed intent is not limited to that single dialogue. While the buyer's immediate needs can often be resolved fully by the agent, that captured intent can also be leveraged by marketers, salespeople, and customer success reps downstream for subsequent customer interactions. It contributes to much richer customer profiles that incorporate the unstructured data of these dialogues, which enable generative AI technologies for the marketer to more deeply analyze and segment their audience.



Source: PathFactory

Near Perfect Alignment to the Right Message at the Right Time

Marketers have been striving to deliver the right message, at the right time, to the right audience since the dawn of digital marketing.

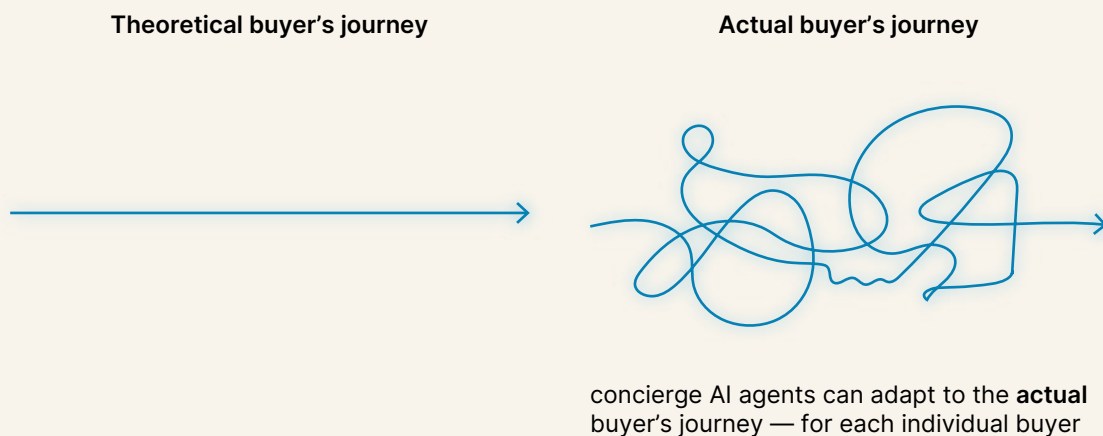
Concierge AI agents can now finally fulfill that promise for a wide swath of scenarios where a buyer has been triggered by something — an ad, an email, a social post, a comment from a colleague, a request from their boss, an idea that popped into their head from some tangential source, really anything — and attempts to engage with the brand to find a resolution.

The right message is in the eye of the buyer: *does it answer the need or desire they have?*

The right time is in the eye of the buyer: *does it answer that need or desire when they want it?*

The right audience is in the eye of the buyer too: *every buyer is an audience of one from their point of view.* If the right message is delivered to them at the right time, they accept that they are the right audience.

Actual Buyer Journeys Have Never Been Linear or Homogenous



This is a massive paradigm shift in the implementation of buyer journeys.

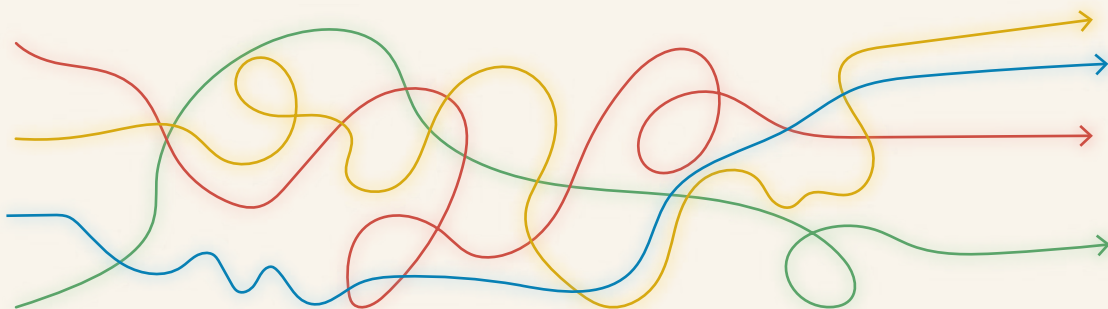
Previously, journeys were constructed top-down by marketers. We'd define largely deterministic, linear paths that we expected buyers to follow and develop content and offers for key milestones we set along the way. We might design a handful of variants for different buyer personas and segments, but these alternatives were mostly fixed and finite.

Because the actual buyer's journey almost never matched the theoretical buyer's journey that had been constructed top-down, even with decent intent signals there was often a gap between each buyer's ideal path and the pre-defined ones marketing had labored to create. When the buyer zigs or zags, the pre-defined buyer's journey struggles to follow. Those divergences are where buyers drop out.

Concierge AI agents flip this model on its head by dynamically adapting content and offers to buyer journeys bottoms-up. For any given circuitous path an individual buyer chooses to take, the agent responds as if that was exactly what it expected. Now when the buyer zigs or zags, the agent keeps right up with them.

These agent-served journeys are no longer mapped to a finite number of paths or personas. They are unbounded, delivering a truly 1:1 tailored experience for every buyer that connects.

Concierge AI Agents Support 1:1 Experiences for Each Buyer's Journey



concierge AI agents can adapt to an infinite number of buyer journeys

Source: chiefmartec

But a bottoms-up paradigm delivers more than individualized experiences to each buyer. These different buyer journeys can still be aggregated into clusters of similarity. However, instead of applying that *down* to individual buyers, these clusters can be reported *up* to marketers. All these concierge AI agent interactions with buyers serve a dual purpose as a virtual army of market researchers.

The insights that can be distilled from the aggregation of all the agent interactions can guide the marketer to develop new content and offers that can be fed into the agent's pool of resources to draw upon for future buyer interactions. They can help inform product and go-to-market strategy because they represent the *voice of the buyers* — emphasis on the plural — with high fidelity.

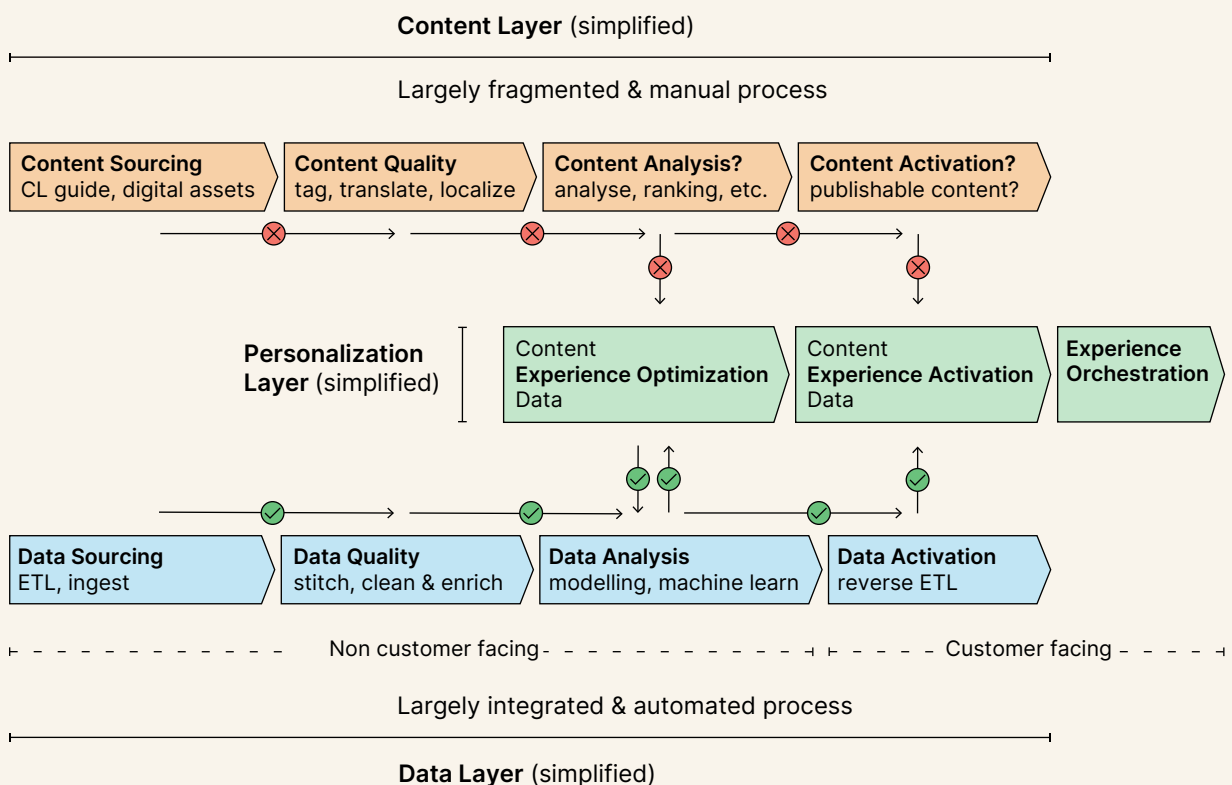
The same LLM technology that so efficiently adapts content and information to each individual buyer is also excellent at distilling the unstructured transcripts of all those buyer interactions into actionable insights for the marketer to better understand and serve their audience.

Enabling Concierge AI Agents: The Role of the Data and Content Layers

Concierge AI agents, powered by advanced large language models (LLMs), represent a paradigm shift in customer engagement. These agents thrive on their ability to deliver hyper-personalized, real-time, and contextually relevant experiences to individual customers. At the heart of their success lies the seamless integration of two critical components: the data layer and the content layer. Together, these layers provide the foundational architecture required to power these agents effectively and hyper-personalize experiences.

When Data meets Content

Data is Real-Time. Content is not.



Source: MartechTribe in collaboration with Rasmus Houliind

The Data Layer: Real-Time Insights

The data layer serves as the backbone for understanding customer intent. Over the years, advancements in data collection, enrichment, and modeling have transformed how businesses capture and interpret customer signals. This layer processes customer data in real time, stitching together first-party data (like website interactions, content intelligence, and purchase histories) with third-party data (from external platforms and services). By leveraging predictive analytics and machine learning, the data layer uncovers nuanced insights into customer behavior and preferences.

For concierge AI agents, the data layer provides:

- **Customer Context:** A unified view of each customer, encompassing their history, preferences, and intent.
- **Real-Time Responsiveness:** The ability to analyze and interpret interactions as they happen, ensuring dynamic and adaptive conversations.
- **Personalized Decisioning:** Predictive models inform the next-best-action (NBA) recommendations, helping the agent offer highly relevant solutions.

The Content Layer: Delivering Hyper-Personalization

While the data layer provides the “what” and “why” of customer intent, the content layer delivers the “how.” Historically, the content layer has lagged in maturity compared to its data counterpart. However, Generative AI has revolutionized this space, enabling brands to produce and adapt content at scale. This includes text, images, videos, and other assets tailored to specific audiences, regions, and contexts.

The content layer empowers concierge AI agents by:

- **Dynamic Content Generation:** Generative AI creates personalized responses, including product recommendations, answers to complex questions, and promotional messages.
- **Real-Time Adaptability:** Unlike traditional content pipelines, which are often slow and manual, this layer delivers immediate responses by integrating directly with the agent’s interaction flow, ensuring

high-performing content is surfaced based on real-time content intelligence engagement data.

- **Unified Brand Voice & Compliance:** By leveraging “Brand Master Files” or fine-tuned LLMs, the content layer ensures that all outputs align with the organization’s messaging, tone, and compliance requirements, reducing the risk of outdated or misaligned sales enablement materials.

The Synergy Between Data and Content Layers

The true power of concierge AI agents lies in the interplay between the data and content layers. For example:

- **Intent Identification to Content Delivery:** The data layer interprets a customer’s intent in real time. It then triggers the content layer to generate an appropriate response or deliver a curated asset or set of assets that aligns with their needs at a specific stage of the buying journey.
- **Feedback Loops for Continuous Improvement:** Insights from customer interactions are fed back into the data layer, refining predictive models and improving future personalization efforts. Simultaneously, the content layer evolves based on interaction trends and emerging customer needs, ensuring that both marketing and sales teams receive the most relevant, performance-driven content recommendations.
- **Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG):** This technique bridges the two layers. The data layer retrieves the most relevant information from a vector database, which the content layer uses to craft highly specific, contextually accurate responses.

Building the Foundation for the Future

This integrated architecture transforms the buyer’s journey from a series of isolated touchpoints into a seamless, conversational experience. By dynamically aligning content to real-time customer intent, concierge AI agents fulfill the long-held promise of delivering the right message, at the right time, to the right audience.

Beyond marketing automation, these agents are proving to be valuable **strategic enablers**, influencing **sales effectiveness**, **compliance assurance**,

and even investor engagement. Organizations that invest in robust data and content stacks not only empower their AI agents but also gain a competitive edge by deepening customer relationships, optimizing internal workflows, and driving meaningful engagement across multiple business functions.

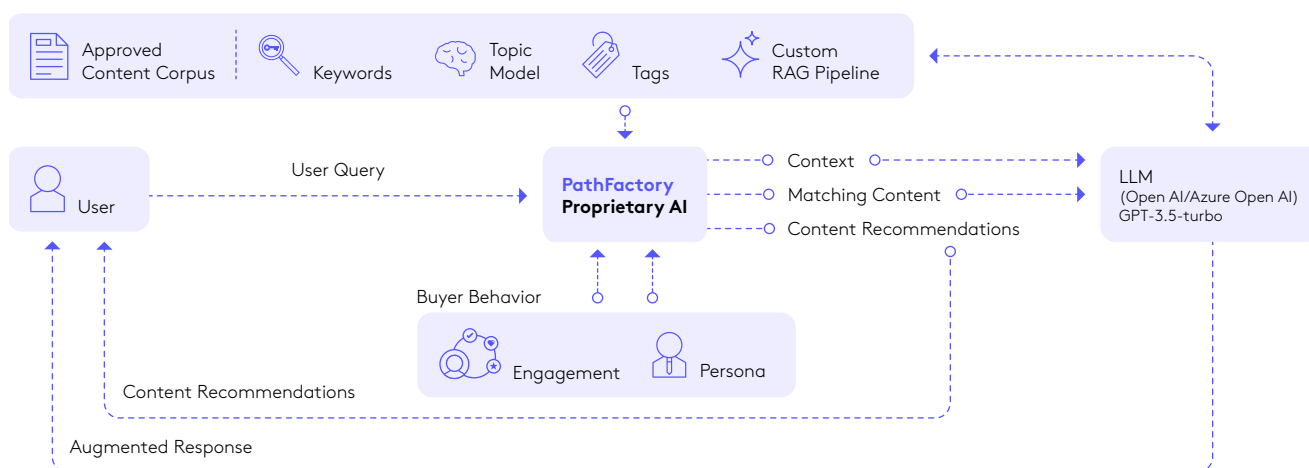
As we look to the future, the convergence of the data and content layers will continue to unlock new possibilities. From hyper-personalized recommendations to predictive customer care and dynamic sales support, this foundational architecture is not just a tool but a **strategic enabler** of growth, innovation, and customer loyalty.

Overview

PathFactory's Buyer Agent, ChatFactory is a conversational agent to help buyers self-nurture on content. This allows buyers to engage with an agent to get personalized answers to their questions, get contextual content recommendations that they can read or bookmark for future visits and have their own personalized webpage with all the details about their conversations with the agent and content.

This AI Agent is built using PathFactory's proprietary AI. It's secure and built to scale with any size business, including tenant isolation and self-tuning.

ChatFactory Architecture



ChatFactory Functionality

In addition to the core capabilities of driving conversations, recommending content and creating personalized experiences, the Buyer Agent also includes valuable features that make it a seamless part of your MarTech stack and marketing strategy, including:

 **Composability** - Agents look like your website and campaigns and provides you flexibility to expose PathFactory agents anywhere for a seamless buyer experience.

 **Headless AI Agents** - Flexibility in where and how you can enable deeply personalized AI driven relationships with your buyers in content playlists, search bars, pop-ups, other agents, personalized pages, and more.

 **Integration** - Open API's & Webhooks to leverage engagement data PathFactory & intent providers like 6Sense, ZoomInfo & DemandBase to drive relevant AI engagements, extended experiences & workflows.

 **Agentic Actions** - Connect personalized content agents with any other agents, apps, and functionalities in your MarTech Stack for a seamless buyer's journey.

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