



WHAT'S WORKING IN PERSONALIZATION?

The Power Of Customizing Engagements

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REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

We've all gotten the "Hi [NAME]" email that masquerades as personalization. But there is more to connecting with buyers than addressing them by name. B2B marketing teams that embrace personalization strategies can accelerate buying journeys by proactively anticipating buyers' needs and offering solutions to their pain points.

Personalization is key to advancing the buyer's journey, but marketers must balance buyers' contradictory desires for anonymization and relevant outreach.

"You have to provide something of value in return for their information, and the threshold has gotten higher," said Susanna Blaich, Director of Marketing for [BlueWhale Research](#), a full service demand gen agency.

According to *Demand Gen Report's* "[2022 B2B Buyer Behavior Survey](#)," when asked to select the top-three criteria that buyers look for when visiting the website of a potential solution provider when making a purchase decision, respondents pointed to:

- Easy access to relevant content that speaks directly to their company (63%);
- Easy access to pricing and competitive information (62%); and
- Content and messaging that speaks directly to and demonstrates expertise around the needs of their industry (56%).

It's clear that buyers want, and increasingly demand, relevant content and personalized experiences. That said, generic content and inauthentic messaging will no longer cut it. B2B marketers must adapt to these changing buyer behaviors.

"As sellers, we've been slow to meet our buyers where they are and provide the experiences they want, but that is changing," said Adam Perry, VP of Product Marketing for [Folloze](#), a buyer experience platform.

Content marketing automation, account-based marketing (ABM) platforms and other tools are making the job of personalization easier and more effective, accurate and efficient. But more can be done. Throughout this report, we'll discuss:

- The top channels for delivering personalized experiences;
- All the benefits of repurposing existing and high-performing content for various segments; and
- How to deliver relevant experiences throughout the customer lifecycle.

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ADAM PERRY, FOLLOZE



LEVERAGING DIFFERENT CHANNELS TO DELIVER PERSONALIZED MESSAGING

As personalization becomes more critical (particularly when combined with ABM), marketers must determine the most effective channel for personalized outreach. Email remains a popular vehicle for personalization, as 84% of marketers in *DGR's "2022 ABM Benchmark Survey"* pointed to it as their top delivery channel.

"Email marketing is the holy grail of personalization," said Blauch. "Email is where personalization started and has seen the most success. We're starting to do more personalizing through our paid ad campaigns. We're trying to break through the noise with something hyper-personalized that people actually want to engage with."

Social media is another platform where personalization can help break through the barrage of messages, and the key is to be creative, noted Leigh Dow, VP of Global Marketing for *Identiv*, a global IoT digital security and identification platform.

Proof Point

Dow explained that Identiv launched its “**Not Tom Cruise: Mission Possible**” campaign to make “dry and boring” security content more interesting. The strategy included nine YouTube episodes starring a Tom Cruise impersonator who acted as the spokesperson for the company’s video management system product, Velocity Vision. The videos were syndicated across social media platforms and Identiv reinforced the campaign with an ongoing email sequence. Additionally, the top 50 dealers received a “mission possible” spy case with playful, on-theme pieces, such as gifts, treats and a Tom Cruise-themed Spotify playlist.

As a result of the company’s efforts, the campaign generated:

- 27,827 views on YouTube, 617.5 hours of watch time, 109 subscribers and 73K impressions;
- 10,360 impressions and 44 reach per post across Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn;
- 183K accounts reached and 167 accounts engaged on Instagram; followers were up more than 13% from 2020;
- 313 unique email clicks; and
- \$2,700,410 in revenue share.

“Email marketing is the holy grail of personalization. It’s where personalization started and has seen the most success.”

SUSANNA BLAUCH, BLUEWHALE RESEARCH



A PARADIGM SHIFT: PERSONALIZATION LEADS IN THE B2B BUYER REVOLUTION

By Mary Gilbert, Folloze

The B2B buyers' journey is now — almost exclusively — a digital experience.

In a culture of instant gratification, buyers expect timely experiences: The fastest response wins up to **50%** of deals. Personalized experiences are also rewarded, as **65% of buyers** will switch brands if the content does not speak directly to their needs. What's more, we know that consistent experiences are the best approach to secure customer loyalty.

As marketers, it is our job to produce buyer experiences that deliver the growth agenda, with 82% of marketing leaders expected to take the lead to deliver seamless end-to-end digital buyer journeys.

In volatile markets, that's a challenging job. We're chasing after shrinking budgets in a very competitive space. Add expectations for timely, personalized experiences that secure short and long-term goals, and that job grows even more in difficulty. We must be more strategic about our methods for connecting with these buyers who drive their own journeys.

From my perspective, our biggest challenge is that most B2B organizations aren't set up to deliver experiences that can be executed quickly or produce consistent longevity due to issues such as:

- Disconnected touchpoints across sales and marketing;
- Inconsistent internal content;
- Time-consuming compliance approval processes; and
- Underutilized knowledge and insights across touchpoints.



As a result, new campaigns take weeks, sometimes months, to develop, and are confined to structured parameters. Instead of deploying a rich, integrated experience, we lose buyers and drain the budget.

To exceed buyers' expectations and build lasting relationships, we must change the way we view our role, structure our teams and examine our tools and processes. If our goal is to provide timely, customized buyer experiences, we need a transformational approach that puts the buyer's experience at the forefront of all internal and external interactions.

We must empower both marketing and sales teams to recognize potential and act on it in the moment together. We must examine and test the tech stack to make sure it provides the tools we need to scale, govern and respond in timely ways. We must personalize outreach in authentic ways and adapt to buyers' needs on the fly.

We must undergo a paradigm shift into a **B2B Buyer Revolution**.

At [Folloze](#), our top priority is to support customers through this paradigm shift by focusing on anyone/anywhere, speed and adaptability so our customers build personalized experiences that deliver near-term sales and long-term relationships.

To meet anyone/anywhere, we first think about the process of decentralization. This means no longer working in silos: Consider everyone across marketing and sales, ABM, demand generation and partner teams as owners of a single point in a unified buyer journey.

For customers to truly feel seen and heard, the teams must work together to deliver a connected buyer journey that dynamically adapts to where they are, no matter who from the company creates their immediate experience. Each phase of the connected journey includes behavioral insights that tell us what the customer needs next. With this decentralized approach, every moment of the buyer experience signals a brand that truly cares.



Next, we think about speed. The team's ability to work together quickly allows them to deliver timely content that is based on buyer history and preferences, behavior and feedback. Prioritizing speed allows teams to feel empowered to make decisions, align with required compliance and respond quickly. Prioritizing speed helps complete the buying cycle quickly and makes room for the next opportunity.

Adaptability is the third component of this paradigm shift. The ability to modify easily helps internal teams develop a seamless experience that is focused on the buyer. By prioritizing adaptability, the tech stack becomes a key contributor to integration and acts as a unifier of the customer experience. For example, about 90% of customer engagement happens outside of the buyer's website. With a flexible, integrated tech stack, those touch points intersect to provide a more comprehensive view into the buyer's journey performance.

With the Folloze Buyer Experience platform, the entire martech stack integrates into a single, powerful experience engine, with real-time behavioral data so we can understand what truly matters to our top prospects and customers. It keeps sales and marketing aligned around priorities and actions that move the needle on revenue performance.

By prioritizing anyone/anywhere, speed and adaptability, our customers will shift into the paradigm with ease and move into the B2B Buyer Revolution. Their customers will experience a journey that shows them they are understood, their needs are considered, their feedback is incorporated and their engagements are valued. The power of personalization not only increases sales, but it also builds lasting, sustainable connections that improve the B2B experience.

Ultimately, the B2B Buyer Revolution will facilitate the natural interconnectedness of human-to-human relationships that everyone, everywhere craves.



TARGETING TOWARD INDUSTRIES, VERTICALS & ROLES

Website personalization is sometimes dismissed as being too difficult and expensive to execute. Still, quick and easy tweaks can make the website more engaging for a specific industry, company or role.

"You've got 20 or 25 signals in a visitor's digital footprint that can help fine-tune the experience," said Tracy Sestili, VP of Marketing at [Intellimize](#), a website personalization and conversion optimization platform. "For example, a fintech visitor has a specific set of pain points, and they want to see relevant case studies. You can switch up the content and images if the visitor is from a SaaS company."

Folloze's Perry added that industry- or role-specific language is critical to personalization success.

"If you're selling to insurance, they use different language and jargon," he continued. "And that terminology is completely foreign to the legal, manufacturing vertical or SaaS industries."

Perry also noted that companies must spend wisely on personalized outreach, especially when it comes to digital ads.

"You need to look at what's not working when it comes to digital ad spend," explained Perry. "Are seven touches better than three? You need to focus on efficiency with every dollar spent."

A significant challenge, Dow explained, is maintaining the data needed to personalize interactions.

"We target people in government security roles and they tend to rotate jobs frequently, so it becomes a manual process," she said. "We're using ABM and a digital ad platform to be super targeted to the audience we're trying to reach."

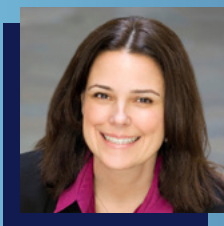
Proof Point

When **Drift**, a conversation cloud company, was gearing up to release its brand refresh, the team leveraged Intellimize to test their new website prior to launch. The team's goals included, amongst other things, testing messaging to ensure it resonated with Drift's target audience. Maximizing engagement between their website and visitors and converting as many of those visitors into qualified leads for sales was also a top priority. As a result of the company's partnership with Intellimize, Drift:

- Ran 19 different campaigns with 121 variations resulting in more than 30 million different page combinations; and
- Experienced a 129% improvement in less than 90 days' timeframe, resulting in more than \$2.8M in incremental revenue.

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TRACY SESTILI, INTELLIMIZE



THE POWER OF PERSONALIZING WEB PAGES THROUGH ABM CAMPAIGNS

With Tracy Sestili, Intellimize

According to [Demand Gen Report](#) research, more than one-third (36%) of marketers pointed to a vendor's webpage as their first source of information — and having vague, generic information isn't going to hold a prospect's attention. To dive deeper into the realm of website personalization, the *DGR* team sat down with Tracy Sestili, VP of Marketing for Intellimize, to learn more.

Demand Gen Report: Can you walk us through some of the key trends you're currently seeing in the personalization space?

Tracy Sestili: We've seen a lot of success in segment/rules-based personalization whereby brands customize the web landing page based on the various customer segments visiting their website. We've recently seen a lot of movement toward first-party data and innovation with AI in everything from advertising to content generation. Brands such as Tableau, Snowflake, Coupa and Okta have utilized AI and machine learning (ML) to tailor their websites to perpetually personalize the site experience as visitors change over time.

DGR: How have technology advancements enhanced website personalization processes?

Sestili: AI and ML are having their heyday by providing programmatic solutions to marketers to make their day-to-day jobs easier. We used to be afraid of AI; it sounded so out of reach and complicated, but it has helped us by making personalization achievable and scalable to any marketer. Tools like OpenAI, Writer and, of course, Intellimize, help even the leanest teams scale their personalization programs.

Intellimize

DGR: What role does data play in website personalization?

Sestili: Data is the linchpin in website personalization; it allows you to personalize for every visitor on every page at every stage of the funnel, even anonymous users. It's also one of the key factors you need to launch a successful ABM program while segmenting and creating audiences to serve up the right message at the right time.

Many ABM programs use demographic, firmographic and intent data across their campaigns, but even then you still have some gaps, such as where they came from previously or if they had been on your site before. Not only can you use the data that is readily available but you can also leverage the digital footprint that even an anonymous user brings when they visit your site.

DGR: Why is website personalization so important? What tips do you have for marketers wanting to leverage website personalization to convert more leads?

Sestili: Your website is perhaps your biggest and highest converting digital asset: It's the storefront to your brand. Per [Sirius Decisions](#), 67% of B2B marketers do research before coming to a site to engage with a sales rep. Marketers need to advocate for conversion rate optimization (CRO) to aid with the personalization of the visitors they already have coming to their site. It lowers the overall customer acquisition costs (CAC) and can help increase overall revenue.

The time has come for marketers to befriend and lean into AI and ML. AI isn't out to replace jobs, it's there to augment remedial and manual tasks to free up a marketer's time and make their jobs easier. Where AI is most powerful is it can dynamically change the web page or landing page a visitor sees based on the digital footprint someone leaves when visiting a website. This can be used to create highly targeted campaigns that have a higher propensity to convert.

DGR: Can you share how Intellimize assists B2B marketers?

Sestili: Intellimize is a cookie-less, no code, programmatic CRO platform that enables B2B marketers to optimize their program spend and drive higher lift using AI and ML within days rather than weeks or months. Intellimize helps B2B marketers with dynamic personalization for both known and anonymous website visitors. Plus, with Intellimize, marketers no longer need to contact their web developer to make a landing page or changes to the website because Intellimize puts that ability in the hands of the B2B marketer.

DGR: What's your best piece of advice for marketers who want to get started with website personalization?

Sestili: If you want to get started with [personalization](#), my advice is to start simple: Identify a few elements of a page that you'd like to personalize. While many people think you need to do all this upfront work on defining segments, you don't. It can certainly help, but you have a lot of contextual data right at your fingertips from each web visitor such as geography, time of day, first time visitor or repeat visitor, even UTM parameters, etc. – use these to your advantage. There are also plenty of tools today to aid marketers in getting started with personalization... just don't be creepy about it.

Intellimize

PERSONALIZING WHILE ENCOURAGING CONTENT SHARING & SYNDICATION

According to [Worldwide Business Research](#), B2B buyers are 57% to 70% through their buying research before contacting sales. That indicates they want to stay under the radar for as long as possible. The offer of relevant content that will address their pain points can encourage them to provide more information in exchange for valuable, targeted content.

While adjusting the content based on industry and specific challenges works, personalization by role is also effective, said BlueWhale Research's Blauch.

"A manager or staff-level person doing the research may need an intro guide, versus a top decision maker might need something more like a case study demonstrating how a problem was solved and the ROI," she explained. "It's all around the content and what you're providing: Are you going to provide a better, faster, easier or quicker way to do their job or ease a pain point?"

When it comes to producing content that addresses numerous verticals in a timely and cost-effective manner, Intellimize's Sestili recommended looking for evergreen pieces that can be tweaked to address the needs of various industries or roles.

"If you're looking to solve a specific pain point facing your company or industry, you don't want to read something general," she explained. "We all have that good timeless piece that performs well. However, you can make that content relevant by adding a few paragraphs that address industry-specific pain points and using a fresh image."

That said, personalization doesn't end at the first touch.

"You want to look at how they engaged and at what stage they are in the buying process," Blauch said. "That lets you know their interest, and you can give them a few options of where to go next."

Proof Point

Walker & Dunlop, a commercial real estate finance firm, wanted to create an integrated, multichannel program with the company's CEO, Willy Walker, on a virtual center stage, interviewing high-profile guests. The company turned to buyer experience platform Folloze to serve as Walker & Dunlop's content and engagement hub. Walker & Dunlop relied on **Folloze Boards**, which are blank digital canvases that help marketers build content-rich destinations and campaigns across the entire B2B journey. The Boards are designed to transform customer data, such as firmographic, buying stage and intent, into memorable buying experiences that guide buyers through each stage of their journey. Walker & Dunlop also built social media outreach programs around the webcasts, created a large YouTube following and turned the webcast into a podcast.

Through the webcast and its adjacent materials, Walker & Dunlop saw:

- The podcast land in the top 3% of all downloaded business podcasts;
- More than five million webcast views across all syndicated channels and content; and
- 150K visitors to its Folloze Board, as of Sept. 2022.

“We all have that good timeless piece that performs well. However, you can make that content relevant by adding a few paragraphs that address industry-specific pain points and using a fresh image.”

TRACY SESTILI, INTELLIMIZE



CONCLUSION

Buyers want to feel that emails, paid ads, social media posts and other content they engage with speak directly to the issues they face. But personalizing messages based on industry, company, role and other attributes can be challenging.

As more B2B marketers adopt ABM tactics, the need for personalization becomes more critical. By narrowing down the target audience, the next logical steps include actionable data, powerful technology to track engagement and super-relevant content.



Folloze builds the leading B2B Buyer Experience Platform. With Folloze, sales and marketing teams can quickly create rich, personalized, and value-added experiences that maximize the revenue impact across the entire customer journey. Top B2B brands, including Autodesk, RingCentral, Cisco, and ServiceNow trust Folloze to boost customer engagement, revenue growth, and expansion across their target accounts. To learn more, visit folloze.com.

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Demand Gen Report is a targeted online publication that uncovers the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and ultimately, drive growth. A key component of the publication's editorial coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multichannel demand generation efforts.

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