

# Making Customer Engagement Magic By Using The Moment of Influence

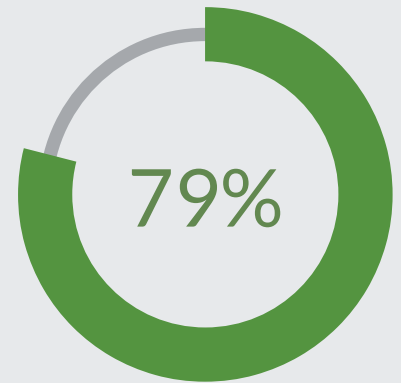
**Embracing AI To Drive Engagement In A Channel-less Environment**



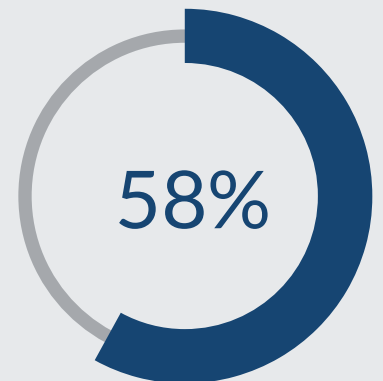
It's not enough for retailers to compete on products and services. Today's biggest differentiator is customer engagement. In this era where consumers expect instant engagement on their terms — when and how they want it — influencing them in relevant ways is paramount. Additionally, today's consumers have a very short attention span, raising the bar for timely and relevant engagement. According to a **BRP Consulting survey**, **79%** of customers say personalized service is an important factor in determining where they shop.

But the amount of customer preference and behavior data coming in is vast. Delivering compelling and consistent customer engagement requires connecting the dots between online browsing, past purchases and in-store visits — because to customers, there's no difference among these channels. In fact, **58% of consumers who own smartphones** say they use their devices in-store to inform their purchase decisions, thereby utilizing multiple channels simultaneously. Rather than shape engagement to fit into an omnichannel environment, retailers must instead embrace the concept of the channel-less — or channel-agnostic — experience, to capture a fuller picture of customer behavior and engage with shoppers at the most opportune times.

With increasing time pressures, evolving engagement expectations and more dispersed shoppers' journeys, the need to identify and reach consumers when they have a high intent to buy — that moment of influence and impact where marketing magic can truly happen — is more critical than ever. In this white paper we'll explore why instant one-on-one engagement via an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based personalization solution at an enterprise scale is the only way to meet the needs and expectations of today's shoppers.



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## Opportunities To Impact The Shopping Journey With AI-Powered Marketing

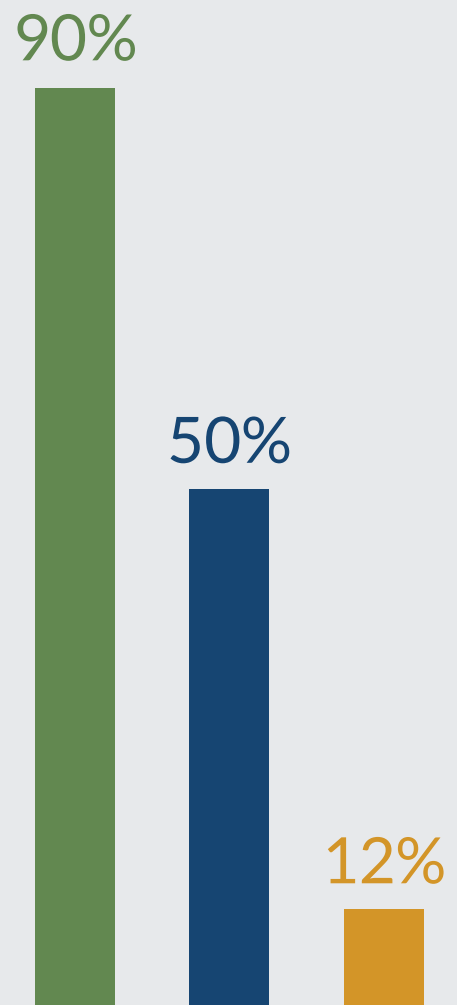
The modern shopping journey spans several stages, and an AI-powered marketing solution leveraged at the key stages can supercharge your customer engagement.

### Stage: Consideration

Shoppers contemplating a purchase interact with retailers in numerous ways. Many research items online – reading reviews, watching product videos, familiarizing themselves with features and exploring color or style options.

The right AI-based marketing platform can help to energize and monitor touch points across every channel, helping brands analyze customer data more precisely. By identifying activity and trends, retailers can take advantage of the consideration phase to reach out with timely, highly relevant web site content, personalized email campaigns and incentives that align with predicted consumer preferences.

A large U.S. department store chain implemented an AI-driven, real-time personalization platform. It saw up to **90%** accurate predictive models based on in-session user behavior, a **50%** or greater redemption rate for personalized offers and a **12%** net revenue lift based on in-session, margin-aware offers.



## Stage: Purchase

Whether through an e-Commerce web site, a third-party marketplace, in-store or a mobile app, customers have several options when making a purchase.

AI enables retailers to guide the buying experience and engage customers at the prime moment of influence – when they're poised to make a purchase decision. Today's machine learning models can more accurately detect visitor intent and offer the most relevant and timely products, services, promotions and information. Modern platforms can also dynamically enroll customers into new segments based on their behavior in the moment. This helps target personalized incentives toward the current interaction, and more effectively drives the desired consumer behavior.

## Stage: Loyalty

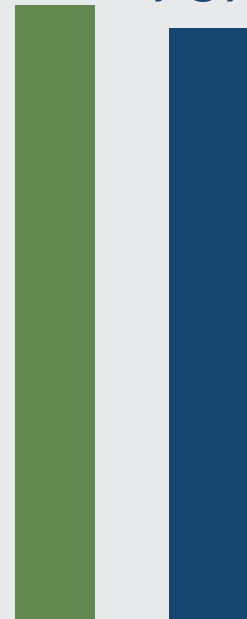
Loyalty programs that offer compelling rewards to frequent or high-value shoppers have the potential to shape customer behavior and drive retention. In a **KPMG survey**, **81%** of Millennials said loyalty program membership encourages them to spend more with the company, and **78%** would switch to a company that offered a better loyalty program.

An effective marketing platform that leverages AI can engage shoppers with highly relevant messaging. For example, displaying available loyalty rewards may sway shoppers toward finalizing a purchase, or rewards may be used to increase cart value with add-on or complementary items if they're applicable to the current purchase.

## Millennials Embrace Loyalty Programs

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81% 78%





AI allows in-store staff to identify the shopper and know her buying habits and intent.

## Four Vital Components Of A Relevant Personalization Strategy

Retailers that more accurately understand customer intent at each stage of the shopping journey will have a significant competitive advantage. With meaningful insight at hand, your brand can engage with customers in real time no matter which channel the shopper has chosen. Retailers should embrace these four concepts to create a relevant personalization strategy:

### 1. Make customer engagement intelligent

So many components go into the customer experience (CX) today that it's nearly impossible for retailers to shape all of them in the moment. What if a shopper left items in her online cart and then visited a store? There's no way for an associate on the floor to connect those dots on her own. Adding intelligence to the marketing mix means that when the customer triggers the geofence, in-store staff can identify the shopper and know her buying habits and intents. It means the app on the customer's mobile device can immediately check in-store inventory for the abandoned items and offer a discount code. It means the customer can reconsider her abandoned online cart and seamlessly complete her transaction with an in-store purchase.

## 2. Make customer engagement channel-less

Shoppers expect a seamless and consistent CX no matter where or when their interactions occur. Whether they call a contact center for support, browse products on the retailer's web site or visit the store, the relationship with shoppers should transcend these individual channels. Doing so relies on pulling customer behavior data from every touch point and blending it into a single profile that can be leveraged to deliver relevant engagement everywhere. Retailers that can go beyond omnichannel and create a truly channel-less experience make their visitors feel valued and understood.

## 3. Make customer engagement instant, relevant and dynamic

Turning insight into action at the moment it matters most isn't easy, but it's vital to delivering a compelling customer engagement that drives revenue and customer satisfaction. By analyzing shopper data instantly, predicting behavior and executing the right action — offering relevant information, accessing reward points, generating discount codes relevant to the current engagement — retailers can engage customers with messaging that resonates at their specific stage in the shopping journey.

Use AI to give shoppers reward points, discount codes and information at their specific stage in the shopping journey.

## Context Made More Powerful With AI

A variety of factors impact shoppers' needs. Elements such as time of day, location and events should be added to traditional shopper behavior data to drive a successful personalization strategy. A robust marketing platform powered by AI enables retailers to assimilate data from fragmented sources — multiple locations, multiple interaction types and third-party sources — and add context to it, resulting in more relevant and timely engagements. This includes:

- Static context such as historical customer information;
- Dynamic context based on the shopper's behavior in that moment;
- Environmental context related to location, events and weather; and
- In-session context that encompasses the activity taking place at that instant.

#### 4. Make customer engagement scalable

Retailers receive visitors at all times, from multiple regions and through many disparate channels. Most legacy personalization platforms weren't designed to support the range of technologies and touch points consumers use today.

A scalable solution enables your brand to ramp up its personalization efforts. When you have a few hundred customers, traditional static segments may be enough. When you have 100 million customers, those segments can no longer describe individuals. Maintaining relevance at scale requires a platform that can both support one-on-one engagements and dynamically segment visitors, in order to better match their current activity as well as their behavior over time. AI helps scale that contextual, dynamic engagement to support growing customer bases and the data from a wider range of touch points.

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## Tackle Pain Points And Skill Gaps With AI-Powered Marketing

Marketers today face new challenges that aren't easily navigated using traditional techniques and solutions. Adding AI to your toolbox can provide the boost you need to overcome these three obstacles.

### 1. Outdated analytical capabilities:

Driving intent and personalization requires extensive analytics resources. Marketers have the data, but making sense of it to inform their decisions, make predictions or use it to engage customers in a personalized way is complex. Collecting the right kind of data from multiple interactions across channels, tying it to an individual, cleaning it and formatting it for use by analytical platforms is difficult. The horsepower to conduct those activities in real time and act on the insight during a customer engagement isn't always available in-house. An AI-powered platform supported by a technology provider with a professional services team experienced in making all of that happen quickly and accurately is key to success.

### 2. Inability to connect digital and physical channels:

E-Commerce dominates many retail marketing strategies. However, the store is where a majority of sales still happen, and brands may be losing revenue if their legacy personalization platforms overlook this critical touch point. An AI-powered solution enables your brand to build the value of your physical assets by emphasizing in-store connections, supporting buy online, pick up in-store (BOPIS) and other omnichannel initiatives, and appealing to customers in person when there's an opportunity to fully engage with them.

### 3. Lack of internal IT bandwidth and resources:

Training AI models on real data with multiple algorithms consumes lots of internal bandwidth. Even conducting meaningful A/B testing to drive incremental revenue lifts often takes more time than expected. Executing these resource-intensive activities with internal IT staff is beyond many retailers' capabilities. The right technology partner can provide the expertise and resources to help train your AI models, assist with productive A/B testing, implement use cases quickly and scale the solution as your needs evolve.



## Conclusion

Bridging the online-offline gap is a serious challenge for retailers, and most legacy tools and tactics aren't up to the task. Deploying an AI-powered marketing solution is the key to getting your personalization efforts on the right path, connecting disparate data streams and turning them into actionable insight. By consistently engaging customers with relevant and timely content, you can drive revenue, boost customer satisfaction and loyalty, build additional value in your existing physical assets and differentiate your brand from your competitors.



#1 AI-POWERED PERSONALIZATION PLATFORM

In the realm of digital transactions, predictive responses need to be immediate and accurate. **ZineOne's** Intelligent Customer Engagement platform enables business users to understand and respond in-the-moment with relevant 1:1 customer engagements to encourage desired outcomes. Recognized by Gartner as a "Magic Quadrant for Personalization Engines" provider, ZineOne's platform has quickly positioned the company as a leading AI personalization provider that is delivering nearly \$1 billion dollars in new revenue while respecting and preserving margins for companies who seek to provide consumers with superior shopping experiences. The patent-pending platform and its continuous learning models provide deep insights into each and every visitor across digital and physical channels while delivering intelligent customer experiences in key moments that delight customers, foster loyalty, and increase revenue.

Learn more at [www.zineone.com](http://www.zineone.com).

844.946.3663

[info@zineone.com](mailto:info@zineone.com)



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201.257.8528

[info@retailtouchpoints.com](mailto:info@retailtouchpoints.com)

