

# Creating Share-Worthy Digital Experiences



We are starting a new chapter in the digital era, one that is governed by two emerging trends, the “always on” lifestyle and Big Data. But surprisingly, there has been little insight into their impact on a digital brand strategy.

Tech savvy consumers have adopted the “always on” lifestyle, resulting in a shift from somewhat sporadic desktop and laptop use to near obsessive use of tablet and mobile devices. The consumption habits of those using these mediums jumpstarted a new paradigm of digital engagement for all companies. The second

emerging trend is Big Data, which refers to the vast amount of data being generated as people and devices become increasingly interconnected across a greater number of channels. Thanks to this exponential growth of information, we’re now able to measure more consumer actions than ever before. Big Data can be analyzed and utilized in a whole new way. As such, these drivers of digital transformation have created a need for organizations to leverage the digital customer experience as a competitive differentiator.

To do so, digital marketers need to turn Big Data into actionable insights to create precisely targeted messages and real-time, cross-channel promotions.



## Connecting the Dots

A successful digital customer experience is one that establishes an emotional connection with consumers, enables sustainable customer engagement, builds advocacy and promotes brand loyalty. The key is to connect the dots from a company's brand to a customer's digital experience by creating an engagement architecture comprised of a combination of data strategy, brand strategy and audience development strategy. Let's unravel what it would take to help make this a reality today.

### 1. Adopting Big Data

Big Data is a game changer and should be the cornerstone of any company's holistic digital strategy. It not only provides unparalleled insights into how to create a reciprocal relationship with customers, but it can also provide digital marketers with the insights they need to deliver the digital experience consumers expect today. Its prowess, however, cannot be fully utilized without taking into account technology and social features.

**Big Data Technologies:** Ultimately, the power of Big Data hinges on the full adoption of its technology. Fortunately, many solutions are available that address the challenges of data access, data integration and real-time batch processing of data coming from multiple channels/screens (mobile, tablet, computers and more). For example, business intelligence (BI) and extract, transform and load (ETL) tools, ranging from Hadoop, Mashup, MapReduce, NoSQL to Storm, Kafka, Drill and Dremel, can help aggregate, manage, analyze and visualize Big Data, and not just datasets. Eventually, marketers can

analyze the filtered data directly, load it into unstructured databases or send the data to multiple devices to help formulate multi-platform/multi-screen strategies. The goal is to derive insights that lead to actionable and strategic recommendations about customer behavior, media performance and channel effectiveness.

**Social Features:** It's imperative that digital companies create data capture models that engage end-users at every step. Doing so will keep all aspects of digital strategy consistent, from market and consumer insights for segmentation (e.g. email) to brand positioning and communication (e.g. social media). This goes beyond just implementing social and community features, such as social login and social network sharing. For example, by allowing your members to connect the ID/profile they use on your site to multiple social media accounts, they can share content from your site across multiple social channels with just one click, and you will be able to mine a wealth of data to provide more relevant recommendations.

Similarly, advertisers can retarget their audience on social platforms through data collected from their own websites. For instance, advertisers can leverage Facebook Exchange (FBX) to place ads on Facebook for those visitors who came to their site but left before purchasing.

## Big Data in Perspective

Companies in nearly every industry are finding unique uses for Big Data, allowing them to innovate and differentiate in new and exciting ways.

With so many uses for Big Data, however, it's not always easy to understand exactly how it may benefit your enterprise. *Website Magazine* spoke with Joe Lichtenberg, Vice President of Edge Computing at Mirror Image, on this powerful enabling technology for processing and analyzing massive amounts of data, and how the trends can be leveraged today.

Learn more at <http://wsm.co/BigDataPerspective>.



## 2. Strategizing Brand & Experience

In the age of multi-platform publishing, organizations must regularly motivate customer interactions through targeted communications across multiple channels. The new digital customer experience requires that marketers think “holistically” about their customers and markets, and how customers will access those markets. Instead of focusing only on customer acquisition, digital marketers need to develop strategies that help understand what drives customer behavior and how to align products and services to a customer’s interests and desires.

*Adapt Business Objectives:* To begin, focus on the fundamentals. This starts with a deep and broad understanding of a company’s financial, strategic and business imperatives, product and service roadmap and marketplace competition. In particular, digital marketers need to keep their finger on the pulse of the industry, which includes regularly auditing competitors, mining publicly available market data and closely monitoring the social sphere. The results should portray a clear picture of the brand’s strength and positioning, how people around the globe connect with the brand (and one another) and enable digital marketers to better align brand strategy with business strategy.

*Elevate Consumer Experiences:* Customers learn about your brand through compelling stories and experiences via multiple touchpoints, including websites, apps, social media, billboards, broadcast and others. Rather than pushing information through loosely aligned channels, focus on developing and nurturing unique, personalized relationships with customers. This can be achieved

by monitoring online behavior, providing high value, personalized and timely communication, integrating information from multiple back-end systems, and collaborating with customers through their own trusted channels, such as feedback forums, communities, etc.

Case in point, when leading the implementation of a gaming trophies system for a well-known gaming console, our most important business benefit was the sheer volume of consumer data we were generating. In particular, a unique feature of this new system was the ability to browse friends’ trophy lists. Customers could now see what other games their friends, as well as other users were playing, which in turn created tremendous cross-sale and up-sale opportunities.

### Digital Transformation: Why Should You Care?

A comprehensive digital strategy is quickly becoming a key basis of competition in every company, regardless of size or industry. To reap the full benefits, organizations should learn, observe and listen to consumer interactions in order to craft relevant brand experiences. A successful digital experience is the combination of a well-thought-out brand experience and a robust data engine. Digital marketers need to be passionate, creative, thoughtful, analytical and, above all, fueled by a passion for innovation, which aligns with a company’s broader goals and business objectives.



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