

The Secret to Intent-Based Marketing

Driving Conversions with 1:1
Personalization



Personalized Experiences Driven by Customer Intent

Intent-based marketing is rapidly gaining in popularity among digital marketers for one reason: it works. But are you putting it to work on your own digital properties?

Google employs intent-based marketing with every single search conducted – more than 2 million times per minute, in fact. After all, what you search speaks volumes about your wants, needs and intentions. That’s great for Google, who generates billions of dollars in ad revenues, but what about you?

To date, intent-based marketing for the rest of us has been about ad targeting based on anonymous user behavior. Visitors reveal their interests through the sites they frequent and the pages they view (providing “intent signals”), and then marketers target them with ads around the web. This is proving to be an effective and increasingly popular digital

marketing tactic, but it requires you to rely on third-party data, tracking methods and advertising options.

What if you could use the insights gained from observing the behavior of your own visitors and users, on your own site or in your own app? What if you could understand their interests and accurately interpret their intent, and then deliver highly relevant, individualized experiences that drive deeper engagement with your content and more conversions for your business? Personalized one-to-one experiences, driven by consumer intent, can give you an unfair advantage, something we all need when competing for the scarcest resource on the planet – human attention.

Read on to learn more about the role of intent in digital marketing, the analytics and tracking capabilities needed to support it, and how deep behavior data is necessary to support an effective intent-driven personalization strategy for your organization.



Observing Behavior to Understand Intent

Behavior-based marketing uses information collected from an individual's browsing behavior to determine the appropriate products or content to display. Solely relying on past behavior to target your marketing, however, is not entirely sufficient. For example, a sporting goods store that sells bikes could logically make recommendations to a shopper based on the bike he was looking at yesterday. If the shopper returns the next day, it could indicate sustained interest, but what if he starts looking at mountain bikes whereas the day before he was researching road bikes?

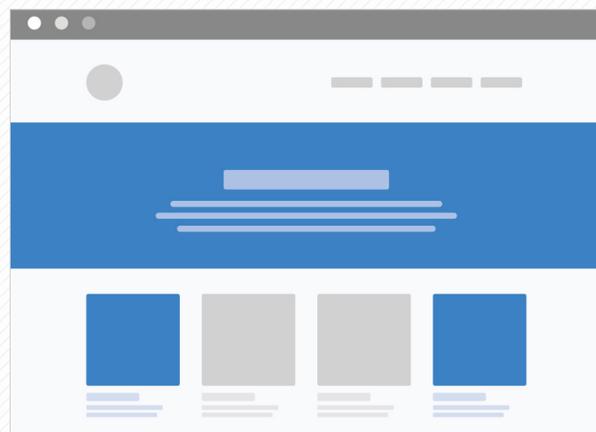
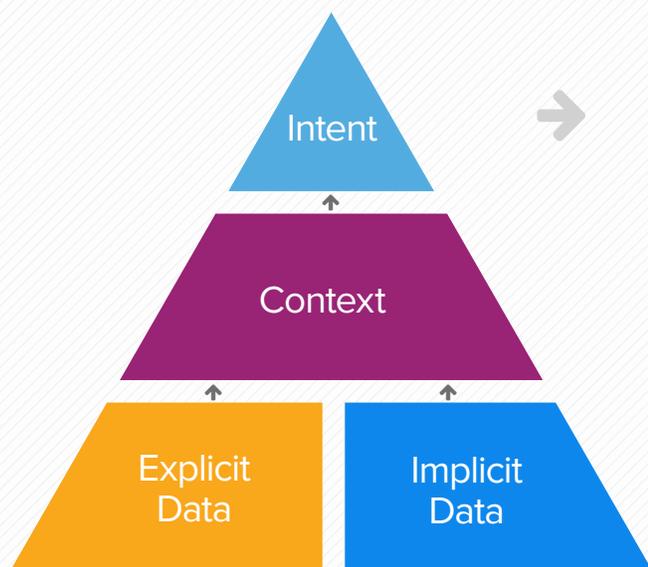
To boost sales, marketers have to try to decipher why visitors are on their sites and what they're doing in-the-moment,

while also leveraging details about what they've done in the past. Maybe a consumer is ready to buy, or maybe he's just doing research. Previous behavior alone does not always reveal a visitor's true interests.

So before presenting a potentially irrelevant – or disconcerting – recommendation or personalized message, you need to understand the context in which he is operating.

Achieving this level of understanding requires proper interpretation of two types of analytics data: explicit and implicit.

Using **explicit** and **implicit** visitor data to understand context and intent



EXPLICIT DATA

Explicit data is gathered from trackable information like campaign or referring source, browser type or geographic location, or when the user performs an action, such as filling out a form, conducting a search, adding an item to his shopping cart or making a purchase.

IMPLICIT DATA

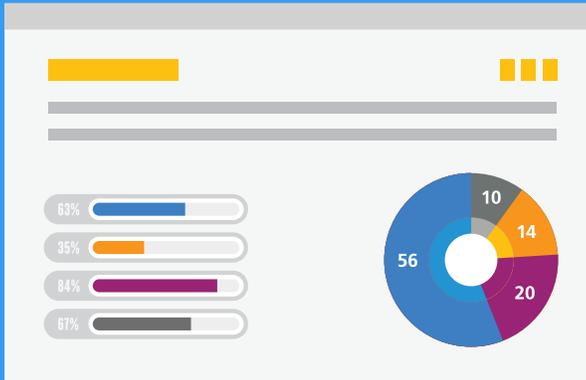
Implicit data is gathered about users from their online behavior – such as browsing history, viewing patterns, actions taken or time spent.

Intent-based marketing is founded on the premise of delivering content to a consumer at the point in which he is looking for specific information or products. It's about recommending products or content that correctly aligns with what the consumer is actually interested in at any given time and place. And with an average of 50% of most sites' traffic

coming from social channels and search, and bounce rates often exceeding **60%**, the opportunity is even more present to instantly and better understand the intent and mindset of a visitor when he arrives on your site and begins exploring.

Hierarchy of Digital Marketing Analytics

Getting at the heart of intent-based marketing requires a quick primer on digital marketing analytics. There are multiple levels of data that can be tracked, all of which are valuable, of course, but it's the fourth level – **individual, deep behavioral data** – that is the **most important ingredient in intent-driven personalization**.



Aggregate baseline data

Baseline data is what typically comes to mind when people think of web analytics. Aggregated website (or mobile app) data – number of visits, length of visit, bounce rates, average time on site, page views, etc. – are pooled together and often presented in neatly organized dashboards. Baseline data is ideal for obtaining an overall view of your website traffic for, among other things, measuring month-over-month or year-over-year traffic goals. Generally, none of this information is particularly time-sensitive nor can it help with individual targeting and personalization.

Aggregate source data

A natural extension to baseline data, source data provides aggregated details on where traffic originated. Source data typically reveals the referring site, email or ad campaign and/or visitor geographies. Like baseline data, source data provides a high level view of your traffic and is not particularly time-sensitive. However, this information can be incredibly useful for allocating marketing spend and knowing where to focus a company's tactical efforts. For instance, with source data you can identify which campaigns are most (or least) effective at driving traffic or whether it makes sense to localize your website to cater to people visiting from a foreign country. But as with aggregate baseline data, when it comes to delivering personalized experiences, it's not going to help.

Individual, high-level activity data

Different from baseline and source data, individual activity data begins to look at each person accessing your digital properties, where they are coming from, and the unique actions they take when on your site. These explicit data points play an important role when beginning any type of personalization effort – particularly with rule-based segmentation and targeting. As an example, using individual activity data, you can determine if the person on your site is a first-time visitor, what pages or products he viewed and, if applicable, which campaign he originated from. In an effort to respond to visitors in the moment, it's important that this information be available as soon as possible.

Individual, deep behavioral data

The final category represents the crème de la crème of digital marketing analytics. When it comes to truly understanding each and every person visiting your website or mobile app, individual behavioral tracking – more specifically, deep behavioral tracking – is unprecedented. Neither aggregate baseline or source data, nor individual high-level activity data, can reveal much about an individual's true preferences, interests and intent. Deep behavioral data can. And more than any other form of analytics, individual behavioral data offers insights marketers need to deliver intent-driven personalization.

Type	Scope	Understanding	Time Sensitivity
Baseline	Aggregate	Low	Low
Source	Aggregate	Medium	Low
Activity	Individual	Medium	Medium
Behavioral	Individual	High	High

Deep behavioral data exposes what people are doing when they are on a web page – scrolls, hovers, clicks, active time spent per page (“dwell time”), both in the current session and for all previous sessions – to provide marketers with all the implicit data critical for confidently determining interest and intent. Only deep behavioral tracking can illuminate each visitor’s preferred categories, brands, price points, tags or topics, in the context of explicit data like referring source and geographic, firmographic and demographic information. Whether personalizing messages, making inline content changes or introducing individualized product/content recommendations, it’s critical that deep behavioral data be captured and instantly available and actionable.

The “Secret Sauce” for Intent-driven Personalization

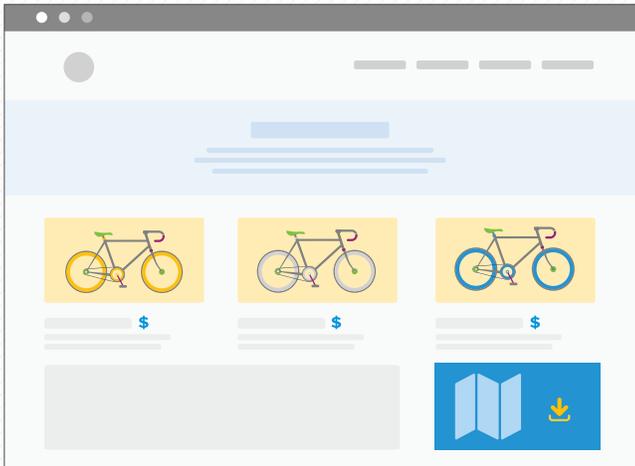
Intent-driven personalization is the most effective form of intent-based marketing. It works by collecting individual implicit and explicit behavioral data and activity data, and combining it with individual user profile information, such as past purchases and demographic information. It then invokes machine-learning algorithms and predictive analytics to interpret and truly understand consumer interest, followed by the automatic creation of a dynamic, personalized experience unique to that user delivered in real time.

There are numerous well-documented reasons why today’s empowered consumers have come to expect brands to accurately address their individual needs. For online marketers, this means adapting strategies toward intent-driven personalization. Consider this example of an in-store experience: A woman walks into a shop and the clerk asks her, “Can I help you find something today?” She replies, “No thanks, I’m just looking.” Is the clerk going to start bombarding her with guidance and special offers or is he going to observe the visitor’s behaviors to learn more about her purpose for being there and offer assistance accordingly? Hopefully the latter, or the shopper would surely leave the store with a bad impression.

The same is true for a website, whether B2B or B2C. If a B2B site can deduce the reasons why someone is there – for example, researching a certain technology category versus drilling down into specific products – and show the visitor additional relevant information such as a video, white paper or blog post, the visitor is going to react more favorably than being blasted with promotions. Or, if the bike browser is still trying to decide between road bikes and mountain bikes, he will have a much more positive experience if the site delivers content that helps him understand the different styles and uses of these bikes versus pushing certain products at him. Once it’s clear that he is going down a particular path, the site should help him understand specific features and benefits of a particular type or model of bicycle.

Meeting today’s consumers’ expectations is certainly one important reason to embrace intent-driven personalization, but the benefits of surprising and delighting them may be even greater. It’s an opportunity to show consumers you not only understand them – at the individual level – but you also care about them. By focusing on what they want, like or love, you can evoke a positive emotional response and connection through one-to-one personalized experiences. It’s well designed moments, in fact, that build brands.

What's behind John's Individualized Experience?



- John sees recommendations for 3 Trek road bikes, including 1 silver one, around the \$1000 price point.
- John also sees a message with a link to “Best Bike Routes around Chicago.”



John visits a sporting goods retail site.



This is John's second visit to the site in 2 days.



John viewed 2 mountain bikes and a free-standing basketball hoop during his initial 1-minute site visit.



In the current session, however, John spent 8 minutes viewing multiple road bikes including 2 Trek bikes for 3.5 minutes each.



John then spent 1.5 minutes viewing an article about road biking.



John also browsed some cycling gear and placed a silver aerodynamic Giro bike helmet in his shopping cart but did not complete a purchase.



John lives in the greater Chicago, IL area. It's currently springtime.



John last purchased a bicycle plus accessories this time of year 5 years ago and spent \$1042 total.

Embrace Intent to Advance Your Business

When you're planning your website or in-app personalization strategy, remember this mantra: Not all clicks are created equal – or even indicate interest. To effectively and accurately determine visitors' true preferences, interest and intent – and personalize accordingly – companies need to track dwell time and other measures of active engagement, and incorporate profile, transactional and additional behavioral data. This is essential for understanding customers and for ensuring that any personalization is appropriate and

relevant. The future of digital marketing will not only rely on matching content based on the behavior of a visitor on a particular site, but it will go much deeper by understanding the mindset and intent of the consumer. Intent-driven personalization, arguably the most important form of intent-based marketing, might just be the most powerful weapon in a company's arsenal for increasing engagement and conversions.

About Evergage

Evergage's cloud-based platform empowers digital marketers to increase engagement and conversions of their visitors and users through real-time 1:1 personalization based on deep behavioral analytics and customer data.

Contact Evergage at **888-310-0589** to speak to an expert about your needs today!

