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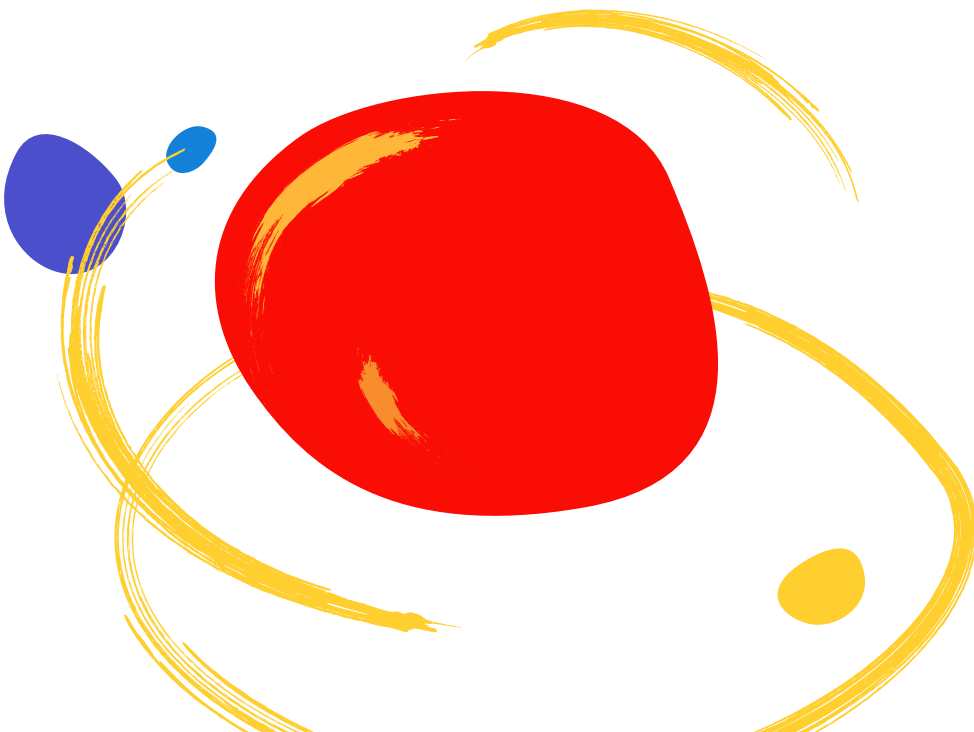
Become an Experience-Led Business with an Agile CX Tech Stack

A guide to choosing technologies that will support your most ambitious CX goals



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Welcome

If you ask almost any marketing leader, they will tell you that a positive customer experience (CX) is the lifeblood of their business. But not every company is an experience-led business—in fact, it's not even close. [Research suggests that just 31 percent](#) of companies are truly experience-led.¹

If you're not an experience-led company, you have a major competitive disadvantage. Experience-led companies have 1.6x higher brand awareness, 1.5x higher employee satisfaction, and 1.9x higher average order value. They also have 1.7x higher customer retention, 1.9x return on spend, and 1.6x higher customer satisfaction rates.¹

Plus, experience-led companies are more agile and quick to respond when customer needs evolve. Agility is especially critical now as the ongoing pandemic affects how customers prefer to buy and interact. For example, experience-led companies were among the first to expand their digital offerings so their customers could do more online.

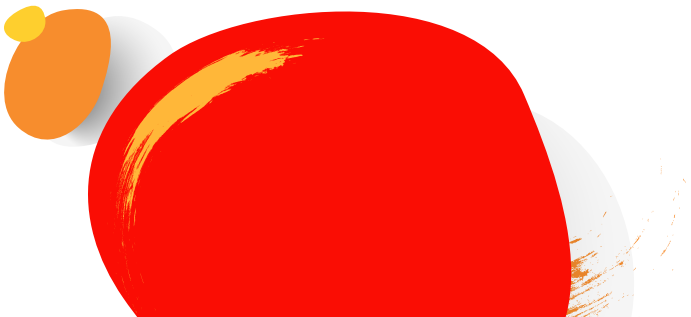
"Experience-led businesses adapted successfully to the pandemic because they were already highly attuned to their customers' needs," said Adam Justis, Director of Adobe Experience Cloud Product Marketing. "And, once they knew what their customers needed, they didn't hesitate to act on it."

But becoming an experience-led company isn't easy. It requires strong leadership from marketing—and an integrated CX technology stack that combines best-of-breed marketing technologies from multiple disciplines.

Why CX is essential for 2021 and beyond

Today's customers have asked for more from businesses and brands. In a survey of 3,500 consumers, 30 percent said they are using customer service more since the pandemic.² And nearly half of business buyers say that new digital sales and customer service models are less effective than more traditional ones.²

Those numbers suggest that agile, experience-led companies will have an advantage through the pandemic era and beyond.



Essential characteristics of a great customer experience

An outstanding CX is distinctive and memorable. Customers remember it and come back for more. Most great customer experiences have other important things in common, as well. Almost all are powered behind the scenes by an advanced CX tech stack. And almost all have these characteristics:

- **Personalized.** Great experiences are personalized. In fact, roughly two-thirds of consumers expect personalization as a standard of service.³ To deliver a personalized experience, you must analyze and learn from large quantities of customer data in real time. AI and machine learning are increasingly used to power personalization.
- **Connected.** Great customer experiences unify all your channels. For example, in-store sales reps know about what customers have bought online, and digital promotions consider customers' behavior in stores. Not surprisingly, customers who shop both online and in store have a [30 percent higher lifetime value](#) than those who shop using only one channel.⁴ To deliver a truly connected experience, you must have real-time customer profiles that pull data from all the systems and touchpoints your customers interact with.
- **Responsive.** Great customer experiences are responsive. They meet customers wherever they are and evolve in harmony with customer needs. To deliver a responsive experience, your CX tech stack must be agile and able to respond instantly. Already, 36 percent of CX leaders can personalize the customer experience in real time.⁵

Getting the CX tech stack right

It's virtually impossible to deliver a great experience today without an advanced CX tech stack—and that typically means seeking out the best software in many different categories. In fact, research from Gartner suggests that today's highest-performing brands rely on a wide variety of technologies rather than a single "one and done" platform.⁶

But choosing the right technologies and getting them all to work together can be a major challenge. There are more than 8,000 CX tech stack solutions on the market today, up by an astounding 5,233 percent since 2011.⁷ With so many options to choose from, you must be able to identify the features most critical for your business, quickly and accurately compare solutions, and efficiently determine which independent software vendors (ISVs) are the best fit.

Learn from Adobe Partners

Adobe understands the challenges of developing an agile, best-in-class CX tech stack. Many brands rely on Adobe Experience Cloud to deliver data-driven, tailored experiences across all customer touchpoints. But most of our customers do not run the Experience Cloud in isolation. Instead, they run it with applications offered by the Adobe Exchange, a vast network and ecosystem of ISVs that further enhance Experience Cloud's capabilities and functionality.

In this eBook, you'll get advice from our Premier Partners on key requirements for your CX tech stack, separating the "must haves" from the "nice to haves," and choosing ISVs to help grow your experience-led business.

Mobile Is the Missing Link

Including linking and attribution technologies in your tech stack can extend your brand's experience to mobile devices

Virtually everyone interacts with brands on their mobile phones. In August 2020, 60 percent of all consumer web searches were mobile. Plus, millennial and gen-Z business buyers are doing more research on their mobile phones. What's more, mobile apps provide business with better ways to engage their users and 3x higher conversion rates. To succeed in this environment, your mobile customer experience (CX) must be top-notch.

But integrating mobile with the rest of your CX can be challenging, particularly because mobile ecosystems are often fragmented and span multiple platforms. That's why it's essential that your CX tech stack bridge be able to connect mobile, web, and offline experiences. Linking and attribution technologies can provide a bridge between all these worlds.

For example, consider the QR code. A Branch link behind a QR code makes a seamless connection between the consumer and the relevant content in the app or on the web. It provides insight into the impact of that single touchpoint, and it allows the data to be associated with the profile of that consumer.

As you develop requirements for your CX tech stack, it's important to keep mobile in mind and be sure to include technologies that drive mobile experiences and insights.



The link behind the QR code on this poster from Joe and the Juice connects customers with the app and provides data on that customer's behavior for analysis.

Deep linking—the overlooked CX tech

Companies that want to deliver a highly personalized experience should consider data, identity, and activation when building their CX tech stack. Generally speaking, must-have components for a CX tech stack that supports personalization include a customer data platform (CDP), a marketing automation platform to synchronize messaging and campaigns, and an analytics platform to uncover insights hidden in your customer data.

But one technology that is often overlooked in the CX tech stack is [deep linking](#). Links are the common denominator—the “currency”—for all marketing communications, across all channels (see social media to the right—NBC’s custom link comes from Branch). Branch links work across a very fragmented ecosystem, including mobile, to ensure a consistent experience and comprehensive [attribution](#). When done correctly, they can be rapidly deployed without custom workflows.

Choose a CX tech partner that will keep mobile top of mind

Even before speaking with vendors, marketing teams should identify their most critical requirements for the CX tech stack. For most companies, those requirements include delivering a great mobile experience that customers will enjoy through the pandemic and beyond.

But assembling requirements is just the beginning. You also have to take a deeper dive into technologies you’re considering. For example, if you need links that integrate with your marketing automation tool to deliver a seamless experience on mobile email, don’t just check the box. Instead, you should do the following:

- Research [what a robust integration looks like](#), as opposed to a superficial one
- Consider how those links would fit into your existing workflow and how your team might use new linking and attribution tools
- Ask vendors for references of clients that are succeeding with the tools you’re considering
- Also ask vendors for references from solution partners who work with the tools you’re considering and the technologies you already use



The link shown above connects users on social media with The Voice’s app and captures data for your marketing automation and attribution platforms.



CX technology spotlight: linking and attribution from Branch

Branch (branch.io) provides the leading cross-platform linking and attribution platform, offering solutions that unify user experience and measurement across devices, platforms, and channels. Clients integrate Branch and then seamlessly deploy links across all channels using [integrations with](#) leading marketing technologies. The result is improved performance at every stage of the marketing funnel—acquisition, engagement, and retention. At the same time, Branch’s unique [predictive modeling](#) capabilities provide comprehensive attribution and engagement data across all channels.

“Mobile attribution is an incredibly intricate and technical space, changing across platforms and evolving with device manufacturers, and it’s very comforting to know that—more than just a service provider—with Branch, we have someone in our corner now and well into the future.” – 9Now



About Branch


Branch is trusted by leading multi-channel marketers around the globe. With 15 offices across 12 countries, Branch powers the marketing activities of more leading brands than any other platform—including Adobe, BuzzFeed, Yelp, OfferUp, and many more. The Branch platform offers [privacy-compliant solutions](#), has been certified by leading [security organizations](#), and delivers billions of mobile links and cross-platform measurement covering more than 3 billion monthly users worldwide.

[Why Branch?](#)

[IDFA Solutions](#)

[Apple iOS 14 Resources](#)

[Branch Blog](#)



Good Data Is the Key to a Great Customer Experience

Clean, standardized data is essential for an agile, highly functional CX tech stack

Digital marketing today is complex and spans numerous online and offline touchpoints. To deliver a great customer experience, you must collect and normalize data from all of them. Unfortunately, many companies don't do this very well.

Decentralized teams often make their own decisions about technology and data standards. As companies grow and add new regional teams, they can end up with multiple technology stacks and wildly different data standards. At this point, analyzing the performance of different marketing strategies often requires exporting data into .CSV files and analyzing it in spreadsheets.

But reporting that relies on spreadsheets and manual processes is extremely time-consuming and often inaccurate. In fact, poor reporting based on incomplete or “dirty” data is a major reason why roughly 21 cents of every dollar spent on digital advertising are wasted.⁸ It is also the reason that marketing leaders find it difficult to make good decisions when markets and events are changing rapidly.

For all these reasons, we recommend you prioritize a unified marketing data language and structure when building your marketing stack.



Deal with data standards first

When you establish data standards at the earliest stages of building your CX tech stack, you can scale efficiently, easily evolve your experience, and make faster and better business decisions. Data standards refer to a unified marketing data language and structure. In our experience, the savviest enterprises align on a marketing taxonomy that they can use throughout their systems and update over time.

Your data standards will make it possible to get consistent and usable information from all the channels your customers interact with, including your website, eCommerce platform, mobile apps, social media, customer support center, and more. They will also make it easier to integrate these platforms and ensure they all speak the same language.

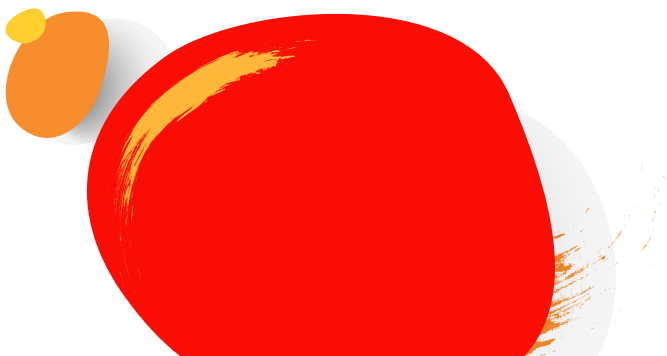
Power your CDP with clean data

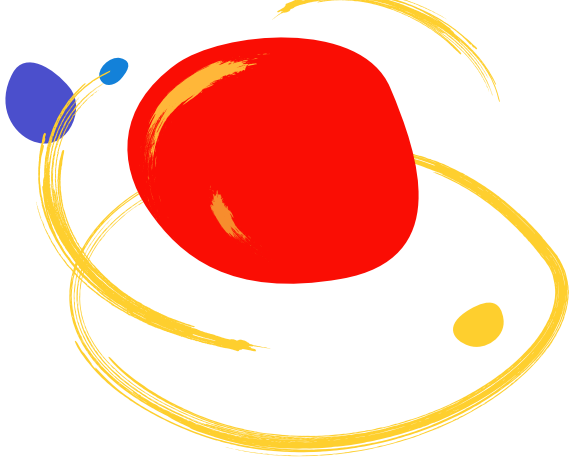
A customer data platform (CDP) is a unified customer database that is accessible to other systems. In theory, a CDP can provide a single source of truth for your entire CX tech stack. However, although the CDP plays an important role in creating an agile tech stack, you also need to ensure that only high-quality data flows into your CDP. To do this, all the teams responsible for creating that data need to be aligned on data standards such as naming conventions and field values.

Pick a winning partner

Most enterprises do not go it alone when it comes to building a CX tech stack and making sure the data that powers it is complete and standardized. Ideally, prospective CX technology partners should be very interested in learning about your current stack, your business objectives, and how you prefer to collaborate.

It is also critical that your technology partners focus on driving actual business outcomes. If a potential partner isn't asking questions aligned with your business outcomes or hasn't done the homework ahead of time to understand your unique situation, this is a major red flag. Ultimately you want a technology partner who will work with your team as a business partner, not just a point solution in your stack.





CX technology spotlight: data management from Claravine

Claravine is a leading data platform that helps standardize, govern, and connect data across every team, system, and channel. Hundreds of top brands use Claravine to centralize their content and campaign data structures, governing the process to generate, validate, and connect data. The end result for these companies is consistent standards and optimal digital experiences across the enterprise—along with richer analytic insights, better experiences, and increased ROI from their marketing and advertising investments.

In the words of one of our enterprise customers, “Claravine allowed us to bridge analytical systems and execution platforms better than any solution I’ve seen in my career as a marketing data and analytics professional.”

claravine

About Claravine

Claravine helps many of the largest brands in the world solve enterprise data problems through our trusted platform for digital campaign and content data management and data governance. We strive to help our customers drive business outcomes by developing the data accuracy, depth, and consistency you need to deliver truly world-class digital experiences and marketing campaigns.

To learn more about Claravine and how we can help you fuel an optimal customer experience, [get started here](#) for a deeper dive into your business goals and where Claravine helps.

Just Add AI for a Better Digital CX

Applying machine learning to customer data in real time can give you the insights you need to transform your digital CX

With the upheaval of the past year shifting much customer demand to online, delivering good online customer experiences is no longer optional for marketers: it's a critical priority. For some industries, digital is now the only channel by which they can engage their customers, and it has thus become the competitive battleground for customer eyeballs, conversions, and loyalty.

Despite the importance of providing good online customer experiences, most brands still aren't doing enough to engage customers on their websites and apps, as revealed by Decibel's [Digital Experience & Conversion: Industry Benchmarks for 2021](#). With high peaks of frustration and low user engagement across industries, there's a big opportunity for experience leaders to differentiate their offering and make their mark.

But how can marketers deliver better online customer experiences?

The first step is by gaining more visibility into those experiences.

Only when businessesees have insight into online customer journeys in real time can they instantly respond and improve experiences. Thankfully, machine learning can help you gain these insights. Integrating AI and AI-driven insights into your CX tech stack allows you to measure and optimize digital experiences in real time.



Turning data into insights at speed

Any enterprise that has millions of customers visiting its website or app every month accumulates a wealth of customer data. But making sense of it can be very time-consuming for digital teams. Digital marketers certainly don't have time to analyze each individual customer session.

This is where AI-powered technology like [Decibel's Digital Experience Score \(DXS®\)](#) comes into play. Based on machine learning, DXS® crunches every single customer session that occurs on a website or app—automatically scoring user frustration, engagement, navigation, as well as technical and form experiences. These experience scores roll up from individual sessions to audience segments, ultimately outputting a single score for an entire website or app. Teams can take an immediate dive in to investigate the drivers behind poor scores—and they can implement solutions quickly as well.

This kind of intelligence not only radically increases a digital team's day-to-day agility, but also opens the door to predictive capabilities. Analysts can use experience data from DXS® to model how changes to a website or app will impact customer behavior and sales revenue—just like the teams of [travel giant TUI](#) and [retail magnate River Island](#), who used data from DXS® to predict \$30 million and \$50 million increases in annual sales revenue respectively.

Finding the right CX tech partners

A business can invest in all the marketing technologies in the world, but if those technologies aren't implemented correctly, accessible to different departments, or integrated with each other, any promised value disappears. In fact, poorly implemented technologies could actually have a negative business impact, as they cause inefficiencies, inaccuracies, and low morale.

As customer feedback in our [7 Questions to Ask When Evaluating Digital Experience Analytics Solutions](#) report demonstrates, ease of implementation and integration are absolutely foundational for effective CX software. Any technologies that don't deliver in these areas should be avoided: teams don't have months to spend configuring their solutions to play nicely together.

Another key success criterion for top CX software is the amount of work it automates. Again, digital teams do not have time to babysit their tech stacks: technologies should be easy to switch on and quick to package and deliver insights that teams would need days or even weeks to gather manually. In the 2020s, if a customer experience technology isn't offering automated insights or optimization suggestions as part of its core functionality, this is a big red flag.



CX technology spotlight: AI-powered customer insights from Decibel

Decibel is the only analytics software in the world that can automatically score every online user experience to identify and prioritize the most urgent experience issues impacting conversion and engagement. Immediately upon implementation, Decibel's AI goes to work uncovering poor experiences across your websites and apps, quantifying those experiences so you can prioritize your optimization efforts.

Decibel's forensic tools then get to the root cause so you can troubleshoot, validate hypotheses, and find the fastest path to resolution. This intelligence can be shared across your entire martech stack with out-of-the-box bi-directional and real-time integrations, empowering advanced personalization and optimization.

"Decibel immediately shows us issues in the user experience that would otherwise take us hundreds of hours to identify manually" – Tim Murphy, Leader of Global eCommerce Shopper Experience at Lego



About Decibel

Brands accept that the better the customer experience they offer, the more sales they can generate. While a lot is being done to improve customer experiences offline, companies have never had the right data to make the same consistent improvements online. Decibel's digital experience analytics technology is changing this for companies like LEGO, Adidas, and Sony. It provides full visibility into the digital customer experience using award-winning AI, so that enterprises can dramatically increase online engagement, conversion, and revenue on their websites and apps. See how we can help your business—[request a quick demo now](#).



Learn from Your Quietest Customers

Including AI-powered customer profiles in your CX tech stack can help you understand what all your customers want—even the “silent majority” who don’t leave comments

Today’s marketing and customer service teams work hard to get customer feedback. They ask for customers to provide feedback via online contact forms, in live chat, on social media, through surveys, and more. And some customers respond with comments, pictures, and even video.

But some customers don’t respond at all, leaving marketers to wonder if they’re getting the whole story. Research suggests that they’re not. For example, only about 10 percent of customers always or almost always leave reviews.⁹ Three of 10 consumers don’t participate in social media.¹⁰ And others will try to fix problems themselves rather than reach out for help. If your CX tech stack only listens to what your customers are saying, you will likely miss a lot of behavioral signals.

Fortunately, a high-quality customer profile can paint a more complete picture of what customers want. And including an AI-based profiling technology in your CX tech stack can help you understand customers’ behavioral cues, even when they don’t provide feedback.



Three of 10 consumers don’t participate in social media.¹⁰

Deciphering customers' unspoken needs

Research shows that companies using customer comments to surface and test new ideas outperform their competitors by an average of 10 points in the eyes of customers (measured using Net Promoter Score®, a metric widely used to evaluate customer satisfaction on a scale from -100 to 100).¹¹ When you can interpret customer behavior almost easily as their comments, you can make even bigger gains.

By including AI-driven customer profiles in your CX tech stack, you can do all of this:

- **Discover—and act on—customer insights in real time.** By applying AI techniques to a variety of CX data, many companies are able to collect and analyze structured and unstructured data fast enough to make real-time decisions. ([Learn more.](#))
- **Improve cross-channel experiences.** By combining digital and physical feedback insights with Adobe's digital signals, brands can evolve highly relevant, real-time customer experiences across [multiple websites](#).
- **Understand feedback across the customer lifecycle.** Omni-channel engagement combined with omni-channel signal collection is the only way to establish and truly understand the connection between customer behaviors, thoughts, intentions, and needs.

Choosing a customer profiling tool for your CX tech stack

If you are evaluating a customer profiling solution for your CX tech stack, consider these questions:

- Does it help you capture every signal and get one trusted view of the voice of the customer, wherever they connect with you?
- Can it integrate data from web, social, video, messaging, call center transcripts, chat logs, and more?
- Does it help you analyze and predict evolving customer behaviors?
- Does it allow you to act in real time by influencing experiences as they happen with instant data and personalized tools at your fingertips?
- Does it offer AI capabilities that allow you to prioritize the biggest opportunities and understand preferences and intent?
- Can it integrate with your other platforms and data sources, automate bi-directional workflows, and trigger actions in customer engagement systems?



CX technology spotlight: predicting customer behavior with Medallia Athena

Medallia Athena is an AI solution that uses machine learning to uncover patterns and trends, analyze journeys, and predict customer behavior. By combining human and machine intelligence, brands are able to discover and recommend high-value actions and focus employee attention where it matters most. [Learn more.](#)

Medallia

About Medallia

Medallia (NYSE: MDLA) is the pioneer and market leader in experience management. Medallia's award-winning SaaS platform, the Medallia Experience Cloud, leads the market in the understanding and management of experience for customers, employees, and citizens. Medallia captures experience signals created on daily journeys in person, on calls and digital channels, over video and social media, and through IoT interactions and applies proprietary AI technology to reveal personalized and predictive insights that can drive action with tremendous business results. Using Medallia Experience Cloud, customers can reduce churn, turn detractors into promoters and buyers, create in-the-moment cross-sell and up-sell opportunities, and drive revenue-impacting business decisions, providing clear and potent returns on investment.

www.medallia.com

[Learn more](#)



Winning in the Era of First-Party Data

An agile CX tech stack can help you create and maintain high-value customer profiles that support an exceptional customer experience

Marketers today face the age-old challenge of “right person, right time, right context”—only now it’s even harder. Fragmentation has made understanding and reaching that “right person” vastly more complex. And as we’ve seen in 2020, so much can change on a dime—which means “right time” is an issue of unprecedented urgency. As environments rapidly change, and as customer sentiments change with them, keeping customer profiles up to the moment has never been more crucial.

Meanwhile, privacy concerns have led to the demise of third-party identity data—including [Apple’s limiting of mobile ad identifiers](#) and Google Chrome’s plans to effectively [end third-party cookies](#) in 2022. Now, brands are struggling to rapidly build up their own first-party data sets to replenish what’s lost. And with marketers’ owned first-party data becoming paramount, the stakes for keeping control of that data are higher than ever.

An effective, agile tech stack can help with all of these issues. It can help marketers use first-party data to nimbly create real-time customer profiles that evolve, and it can give them a greater say in setting the terms of their relationships with data partners—all in a privacy-first way.



Identity resolution enables unified customer profiles

Every experience tech stack addresses the three core stages of data-driven marketing. First, there are tools that gather and hold customer data, such as point-of-sale system and CRM data. Next comes a data management layer, which turns raw data into relevant audience segments in order to optimize performance. Finally, a third set of tools takes those segments and activates them across channels, be it through on-site optimization or targeted advertising on the open web. AI and predictive capabilities are especially crucial to the second and third stages, as they help marketers learn how best to create relevant segments and activate audiences in the most impactful way.

Running through all these stages is customer identity resolution, the “glue” that binds everything together—and arguably CX’s most crucial make-or-break component. Identity resolves all of a customer’s cross-channel identifiers together, letting the CX stack more effectively meld data from multiple channels into a single profile and keep track of who’s being engaged “out in the wild” during activation. Simply put, it’s identity resolution that lets a customer experience stack work.

What to look for in an agile CX tech stack

Critical qualities of an effective CX stack include the following:

- **Speed.** If your tech stack can’t gather and activate data quickly, you’re not creating the right experience. Think of the customer you’re still retargeting a full week after she bought that pair of shoes: the reason is that CX systems aren’t communicating effectively enough—or fast enough—to cause the POS tool (for instance) to let the DSP know to stop advertising to this individual. For maximum effectiveness, each component must not only process information quickly, but also be able to pass information quickly along the “chain,” as well.
- **Coverage.** When it comes to identity resolution, and any other practice area that requires matching your customer data against data from other sources, coverage is especially important. Keep in mind that no system can offer 100 percent coverage of the market, so you may need to work with more than one provider.
- **Accuracy.** Accuracy is crucial to being able to target the right individual—and to treat each member of a household uniquely. Household-level accuracy is also gaining importance as third-party cookies go away, and many marketers see householding as a valuable way to connect to consumers without invading privacy.
- **Customization.** There is no such thing as “one-size-fits-all,” and marketing is always evolving. You need a CX tech stack that lets you manage customer experience based on your specific business needs, in the moment, and allows you to grow and adapt at your own speed based on your business needs as your CX program becomes more sophisticated and complex.



CX technology spotlight: identity resolution from MediaWallah

MediaWallah is a leading identity data company providing data onboarding and identity services, including identity resolution, customized graphs, and de-identification across online and offline channels. Powered by its proprietary, scaled omni-channel graph, MediaWallah's solutions offer flexibility, control, and transparency for more relevant user identity to get the most out of your CX tech stack investment.

MediaWallah is also the first Premier Adobe Exchange partner to help Adobe customers with enhanced onboarding that allows customers to incorporate non-personally-identifiable custom data, such as a loyalty number or customer ID, to tie onboarding results back to CRM in a privacy-safe way. This means marketers have far greater context for measurement and activation than with traditional onboarding alone.



About MediaWallah

MediaWallah, an Adobe Exchange Premier partner, is an identity data company with the mission of putting brands, publishers, and data platforms back in charge of their people-based initiatives. In a field dominated by rigid, black-box identity solutions, MediaWallah stands out by giving its clients flexible offerings, open transparency, and the data at scale to activate successfully across addressable channels. Adobe customers looking to learn how they can get more from their onboarding and identity can visit: mediawallah.com/post/adobe.

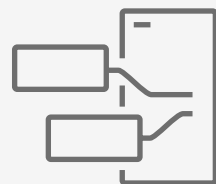
How to Speak Your Customer's Language

AI-powered natural language generation takes the guesswork out of choosing the words that will connect with your customers

Language is one of the most important—and most overlooked—elements of customer experience. The words that a brand uses to connect with consumers represent a source of untapped value for those looking to deliver exceptional CX.

Think of all the language used across the marketing, service, product, and digital touchpoints of an organization. Are the words in the digital and mobile experiences, landing pages, or even TV spots delivering the best experience and activating the brand purpose in a way that resonates?

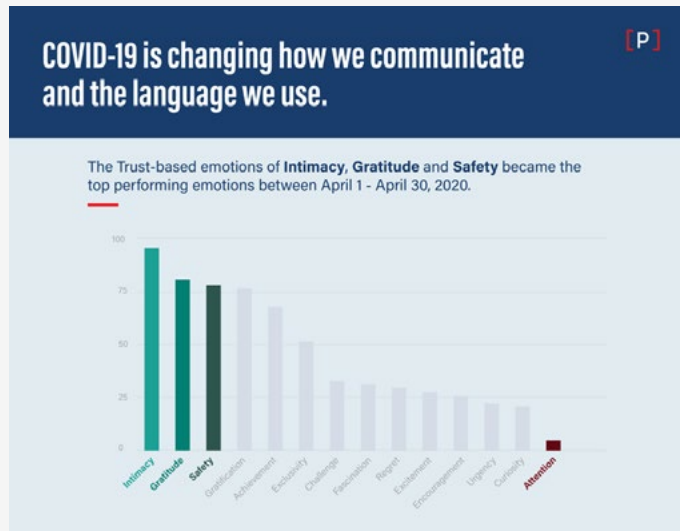
Persado, an Adobe Exchange Premier partner for AI-driven language personalization, seamlessly integrates with Adobe Experience Cloud across channels to help marketing leaders ensure the right words are used at every customer interaction.



**Do you know
which words deliver
the best possible
customer experience,
and why?**

Customer sentiment—and preferred language—can change fast

Consider the words and emotions that resonated with customers during the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak. Persado found that, in December 2019, emotions such as gratification and attention engaged consumers more than others such as curiosity and excitement.



By April 2020, attention was the worst-performing emotion, replaced by trust-based emotions such as intimacy, gratitude, and safety.

As the consumer landscape continues to shift and evolve, it's important to remove the guesswork from messaging because the emotions that engage consumers can and do change quickly. Using language that worked for yesterday's campaign to engage today's consumer is a recipe for suboptimal performance. It takes an AI language platform to precisely align messaging with changing consumer preferences.

Without an agile CX tech stack that includes AI for language—which allows brands to understand and use the specific words that engage consumers—it would be impossible to respond to this kind of changing environment at the speed and scale needed to impact the business.

Top characteristics of an agile CX tech stack

An agile CX tech stack should offer scalability, AI-driven creativity, and personalization technology that can identify the best language for each stage of the customer journey.

Scalability

CX is cross-channel, cross-functional, and cross-everything by its very nature, so any CX tech stack needs to be enterprise-scalable. It's all about driving success in one area of the business and then scaling that success to other use cases, channels, and geographies that make a material impact on the business.

AI-guided creativity

Content and creative are the lifeblood of effective CX, and they form the interface between consumers and the brand. AI can provide creative teams with the data and predictive insights that allow them to do their best work and activate an experience in ways that are proven to resonate with customers, while also driving maximum business impact. It's all about removing the guesswork so the creative team knows they are working on the right concepts, all backed by actual engagement data.

Personalization

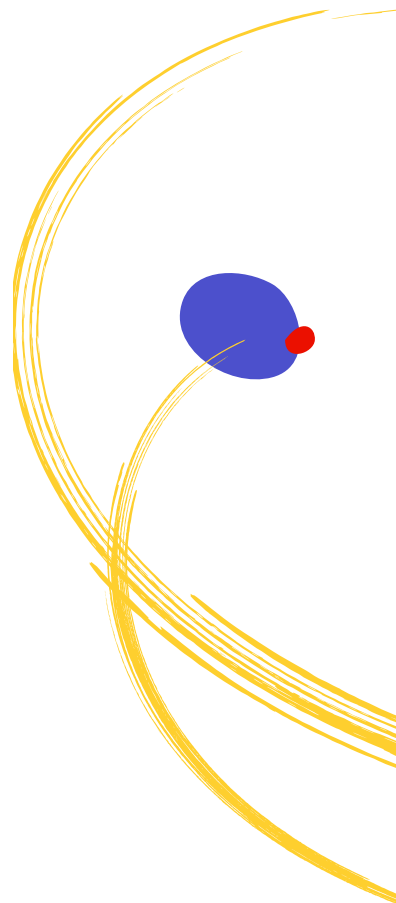
It's also important to be able to personalize language at the various stages of a customer journey and understand what works, and why.

For example, Vodafone applied Persado and Adobe Target to promote its new Try & Buy campaign, promoting a free trial of the company's 5G Unlimited plan across the entire digital customer journey. By combining the power of Adobe's customer analytics capabilities to segment and target audiences with Persado AI-language capabilities to deliver the best message, Vodafone revealed the most effective emotions, words, and formatting elements across each stage of the digital journey. The result was a 120 percent average conversion rate uplift, contributing to 25 percent of their digital quota.

Other things to look for

Beyond the core characteristics outlined above, you should also consider the following when evaluating any new solution for your CX tech stack:

- **Easy onboarding.** Speed to value is a key metric for judging the ROI of any technology, and it's imperative that the technology deliver value quickly, which means focusing on important use cases and getting up and running quickly.
- **Proven integrations.** A good API and integration ecosystem enables teams to scale a technology across more campaigns, channels, and business units and ensures they are focusing on growing the business, not on integrating technologies.
- **Explainable AI.** More and more companies will push for more transparency about how a technology—specifically AI—achieves the results it does, given the need for legal compliance and the increasing reliance on these systems to run critical parts of the business and inform key decisions.





CX technology spotlight: AI-powered natural language generation from Persado

The Persado platform uses natural language generation, machine learning, experimental design, and the world's largest language knowledgebase of millions of tagged and scored words and phrases to deliver hundreds of millions in incremental value to some of the best brands in the world. Due to its capability to learn, improve, and evolve from campaign data, Persado's AI language platform assembles different language elements to create high-performing, on-brand content that resonates with different audience segments.

Persado delivers an average of 41 percent lift in conversion rates across customer engagement channels.

"Our partnership with Persado is a big one to help make marketing smarter AND more customer-focused."
– Kristin Lemkau, JPMorgan Chase CEO of U.S. Wealth Management Group

[P E R S A D O]

About Persado

[Persado](#) is a high-growth, category-leading AI platform that helps CMOs, CXOs, CFOs, and P&L owners unlock a new level of value creation and business growth by ensuring the right words are used at every customer interaction.

Persado's natural language generation platform delivers on the promise of AI-based consumer insights, surfacing the language trends that resonate for different customer segments across the customer journey while ensuring the messages always reinforce the brand voice. By unlocking the latent value of the power of words, companies win every customer moment and experience dramatic new levels of brand engagement and revenue performance—at scale.

Download the eBook to learn more: [How AI Unlocks the Hidden Value of Language to Improve the Customer Experience and Drive Digital Adoption](#)



Engage Your Customers with a Content-Powered CX

Contextually relevant content—especially video—served in real time can keep customers engaged with your brand

Businesses have a customer dis-engagement problem. Despite massive investments in CX technology—[IDC](#) forecasts global spending will reach \$641 billion by 2022—marketing leaders struggle to meet consumers' expectations. In other words, many branded experiences fulfill the requirements of the business, but not the needs or desires of the customer. These lackluster, tone-deaf experiences represent missed opportunities. Disengaged consumers spend less, are costly to serve, and stop paying attention. Worst case, they even become brand detractors.

It's not surprising, then, that [more than half \(54 percent\) of customers](#) think companies need to fundamentally transform how they engage. One important way to improve engagement is to offer immersive content-powered experiences comparable to those available through Instagram, TikTok, and Netflix. In other words, they must be relevant, video-rich, interactive, and easy to consume—and you must deliver them in real time.

This kind of content-powered CX meets customers where they are and, when done well, can evoke an enduring, positive emotional response. [Content that makes customers feel good is especially critical during uncertain times](#). But to make it work you need great, personalized content—including lots of video—and a content-powered CX tech stack.

Building blocks of a content-powered CX tech stack

At a minimum, a content-powered CX tech stack should combine these elements:

- **Data activation.** Data collection only gets you so far—how you act on that data when it touches customers is what matters most. When you activate customer data into something richer, whether it's an empathetic message that resonates with customers or a video experience that connects on a human level—that's where data is most powerful.
- **Real-time rendering.** Content needs to be dynamically rendered in real time—at the exact moment the customer accesses it—based on the most up-to-date information. This ensures valuable and optimal digital experiences that present the most relevant next best action across the customer journey.
- **Content creation and management.** Finally, you must have content authoring and management tools that make it easy to create new content and modify existing content for different audiences and get it to the right people at the right time.

What to look for in content-powered CX solutions

For best results, content-powered CX solutions must offer modularity. Content modularity allows for a central repository of assets—from imagery and copy to audio and animation—to be mixed and matched in virtually endless permutations. The magic of modularity enables content velocity. In other words, you can configure new content—including digital experiences built from highly immersive and visual content, like video—at speed.

At the same time, marketing leaders should be wary of CX technologies that do not atomize content into reusable modules you can dynamically combine and publish across many channels. Static content management that requires publishing and staging one asset at a time for one channel at a time can make adding new content both costly and time-consuming.

Here are some questions to consider when you're looking at content-powered CX solutions:

- How does data drive content across experiences?
- How does data determine messaging?
- How does creative decisioning work in your solution?
- How does it all come together? Can you connect audiences, channels, touchpoints, stories, and data all together to dynamically influence each other?



CX technology spotlight: video-powered experiences from SundaySky

SundaySky's Video Experience Platform unleashes the true potential of video, enabling a new generation of digital experiences that transform CX engagement. Marketers and advertisers generate billions of data-driven, personalized, and interactive video-powered experiences, orchestrated across paid and owned media channels throughout customer journeys. Activating Adobe's data layer fuels SundaySky's platform to drive content velocity and deliver video experiences at the speed of rapidly changing customer needs.

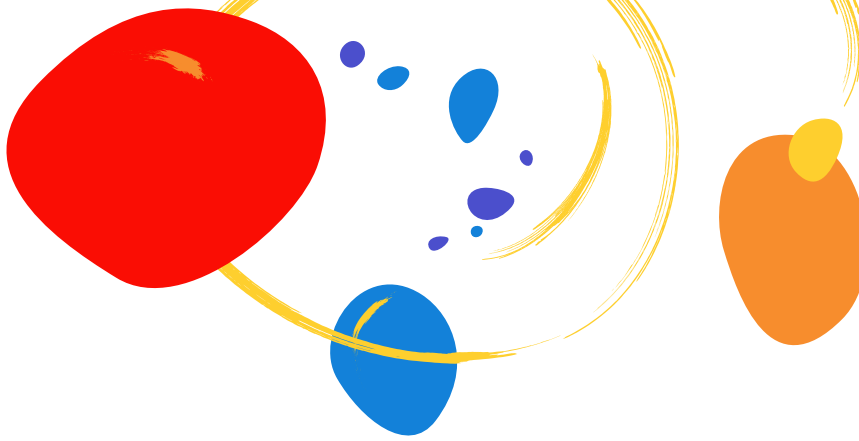
"While the consumer might not directly see the benefits of data that we can use to personalize experiences to them, we can use an engaging platform like video that consumers love to engage with today and inject the intelligence of data behind it to create that kind of hyper-personalized experience. Whether that's a sales experience, a service experience, a marketing experience.... Hitting our target audience effectively, making that experience personalized and delivering it through video—what's not to like?" – Craig Dempster, Global CEO at Merkle, from [Double the Platform Power: A Partner Conversation with Adobe, Merkle & SundaySky Executives](#).

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About SundaySky

SundaySky is transforming CX engagement for the world's most demanding brands, enabling them to deliver video-powered experiences that drive breakthrough outcomes at key moments across customer journeys, transforming high-stakes moments of consumer frustration, confusion, or indecision into moments of engagement that delight and compel customers to action. Proven with companies like 1-800 Contacts, AT&T, Bank of America, Staples, UnitedHealthcare, Verizon, and many others, SundaySky equips brands to achieve step-change business results and quantifiable value through increased revenue, reduced costs, lower churn, and higher customer satisfaction.

[Learn how brands double the platform power to supercharge CX engagement with Adobe and SundaySky.](#)



A Great CX Starts with Intelligent Search

Natural language processing (NLP) and AI can help you deliver smarter search so customers can find exactly what they need on your website

The digital customer experience (CX) has always been important, but a global pandemic has quickly made digital the only experience for just about every business. In fact, research suggests that 57 percent of organizations believe their entire business model must be reconsidered in the wake of COVID-19.¹²

As the pandemic continues, the company website will play an outsized role in getting customers essential information. For examples, customers may visit your website to learn more about fluctuating hours of operation, refund policies, or contactless delivery options. If they can't find it, they may become frustrated or even visit your competition.

Whether in good times or hard times, the customer journey starts with a search. If your website can't handle even basic customer questions, then your entire CX is at a disadvantage—especially as the world changes and once-simple questions quickly become more complex, more specific, and more urgent.

Beyond basic keyword search

The rise of NLP and AI has dramatically changed how people seek out information online. Now when people search, they don't just type in individual keywords. Instead, they ask specific, sometimes complex questions as they would if talking to another human. If you can't deliver a direct, accurate answer, it could be a dealbreaker. In fact, [68 percent of people say they would not return to a website that provided a poor search experience.](#)

Where advanced keyword fits into the CX tech stack

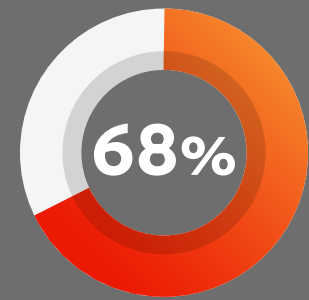
Giving customers the information they need, when they need it, is not just a good business practice—it's the atomic unit of the customer experience. That's why it's critical to have advanced search technology at the center of your CX tech stack that's semantic, that understands language, and that can answer consumers' questions both on your own websites and across search engines, maps, apps, voice assistants, and chatbots.

Being able to control your information across your entire digital ecosystem means you are providing the best possible customer experience, even when you aren't in control of those environments.

Tips for choosing the right CX technology partners

As marketing budgets get leaner, you need solutions that will work harder and go farther. You'd be surprised how many subscriptions start to collect dust while continuing to drain your wallet. So when it comes to selecting vendors to help enhance your online customer experience, always select those partners who understand your customers' pain points just as well as you do—maybe even better.

Further, be sure you understand the specific task a new software integration will perform that will add real, material value to your business. Will it help you drive more transactions? Will it help you lower your costs? Just as you have performance reviews with the people on your staff, hold your software partnerships to similar standards by having regular check-ins to ensure the performance reporting meets your needs.



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CX technology spotlight: advanced search experience from Yext

Yext Answers transforms your business's website with a best-in-class search experience that helps you better understand your customers' questions and give them direct answers, not just a list of blue links.

Further, Yext Answers helps you get the most from your Adobe-powered website by improving conversion rates with embedded transaction CTAs within the answer, reducing support and call center costs by effectively managing your most popular customer questions, and delivering real-time intelligence based on what people are searching for.


Learn how [BBVA USA](#) used Yext Answers and Adobe Experience Manager together, and [request a free trial](#).



About Yext

At Yext we help businesses create better customer experiences using search. Starting on their own website and then extending across their entire digital footprint, Yext empowers businesses to be the source of truth wherever people are asking questions about them.

[Test](#) how well your website answers your customers' top questions and [get the playbook](#) to optimize your CMS to provide great search experiences.

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- ¹ <https://blog.adobe.com/en/2018/04/01/forrester-consulting-it-pays-to-be-an-experience-led-business.html#gs.iwtpxg>
² <https://www.redpointglobal.com/blog/addressing-the-gaps-in-customer-experience-redpoint-global-harris-poll-benchmark-survey/>
³ RedPoint Global survey of 3,000 consumers
⁴ <https://www.gpj.com/news-insights/2017/01/retail-gets-physical-why-brands-are-turning-to-brick-and-mortar-stores/>
⁵ Adobe Digital Trends 2020: <https://www.adobe.com/content/dam/www/us/en/offer/digital-trends-2020/digital-trends-2020-full-report.pdf>
⁶ <https://blogs.gartner.com/benjamin-bloom/2020/07/31/few-genius-brands-successfully-integrate-best-of-breed-solutions-into-a-cohesive-martech-roadmap/>
⁷ <https://customerthink.com/the-larger-your-martech-stack-the-better-your-marketing-performance-maybe/>
⁸ Media Post: <https://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/340443/poor-data-quality-marketers-waste-21-cents-of-eve.html>
⁹ <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/online-review-statistics/329701/>
¹⁰ <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/social-media/>
¹¹ <https://go.medallia.com/rs/669-VLQ-276/images/Medallia-Harness-Digital-Insights-to-Grow-Your-Entire-Enterprise.pdf>
¹² Futurum Research via <https://www.forbes.com/sites/danielnewman/2020/06/23/4-actionable-customer-experience-statistics-for-2020/#1f4162a61a84>

ADOBE EXPERIENCE CLOUD

Adobe Experience Cloud is the most comprehensive suite of customer experience management tools on the market. With solutions for data, content, engagement, commerce, personalization, and more, Experience Cloud is built on the world's first platform designed explicitly for customer experience. So each product is infused with artificial intelligence and works seamlessly together, but also integrates with your existing technology and your future innovations so you can consistently deliver the right experience every time.

