![Ascent 360]

Retailer eBook

How Retailers Are Using Data-Driven Marketing to Level Up the 5 Stages of the Consumer Buying Process

Don't let customers slip through the cracks throughout the buying cycle — meet them where they are at every stage using a data-driven approach

The Changing Retail Landscape and Meeting Your Customers Where They're At

Recently, the retail industry has seen significant shifts across the board in areas like consumer shopping habits, brand loyalty, and personalized customer experiences. One of the most substantial shifts has been the rapid increase in e-commerce and online shopping. In fact, mass retailers' online sales rose 93 percent in 2020; among apparel, fashion, and luxury retailers, online shopping rose to 26 percent from 16 percent, **according to McKinsey**. And while in-store shopping may be on the rise again as things return to "normal", people are still shopping online much more than they did before the pandemic.

As a retailer, how do you keep up with this ever-changing environment, truly engage your customers, and give them an unrivaled shopping experience that will continue to grow your business? (Hint: not the traditional way many have attempted for a long time.)

Simply put, the "batch and blast" marketing approach doesn't work anymore. Consumers are bombarded with marketing messages every day, and they are simultaneously demanding a more personalized shopping experience that speaks to them directly. We now live in an "experience economy" where about **75 percent of Americans** changed their shopping habits in 2020. 40 percent of that group changed which brands they buy from — twice the rate in 2019 — and younger people were more likely to switch.

It's important now more than ever to meet your buyers' exact needs and expectations, and the secret to doing so is adopting a data-driven marketing strategy. This approach allows you to use your own data to identify exactly who your customers are, analyze their purchasing behavior and other identifying factors, and create uniquely personalized marketing for every customer.

We'll demonstrate how using a data-driven marketing approach within the five-step buying process can help you improve your consumer messaging:

Step 1: Collecting The Right Data To Understand The Buyer's Needs

Step 2: Putting Data To Work To Provide The Right Message At The Right Time

Step 3: Creating An Omnichannel Experience To Stay Top Of Mind

Step 4: Automated Campaigns To Engage Consumers Before, During, and After Buying

Step 5: Comprehensive Reporting To Measure ROI and Gain Repeat Purchase and Long-Term Brand Loyalty

Having Good Quality Data Significantly Improves Your Understanding of Your Customers' Buying Journey

During the problem/need recognition stage, customers are determining this for themselves simultaneously (i.e., they're looking for a new brand, need a replacement of an old product, etc.) so collecting the right data will help you stay ahead of the game.

So, What Type of Data Should You Collect?

There is an extensive pool of critical customer data already being collected by your POS and e-commerce systems and identifying the most valuable information will help enhance your data-driven marketing approach.

First and foremost, you should collect personally identifiable information (PII), such as:

- **Email addresses**
- **Phone numbers**
- **Geographic location**

From there, you'll want to zero in on identifiers such as the following:

- **Demographics**
- **Interests**
- **Purchase behavior**
- **How they interact with your brand**

Gender

14.9

85.02%

● Female ● Male

Location

State	Count	Percentage
CALIFORNIA	682	6.69%
NEW YORK	586	5.75%
MICHIGAN	496	4.87%
PENNSYLVANIA	465	4.56%
FLORIDA	437	4.29%

Average Order Value

Top Customer	Bottom Customer
$350	**$62**

Lifetime Spend

Top Customer	Bottom Customer
$950	**$81**

Recency Score / Average days since last purchase

Frequency Score / Average count of purchases

Monetary Score / Average total lifetime spend

To get a hold of this information, it's important to remember that customer data is not just for marketing and selling products. It's also about providing above-and-beyond customer service and building long-term relationships.

Your POS and e-commerce systems are already collecting basic PII data with every transaction. Incentivizing customers to provide additional information is rooted in demonstrating true value. Show them they are part of your community by offering a discount code for a future purchase, the ability to enter a drawing, or an invitation to an in-store event. Show them that they are not simply another name on a marketing list.

It's also important to train your staff members on **best practices** for collecting information at the counter and incentivizing them to do so in a comfortable, non-abrupt way. Educate your staff to assure customers about why they will be contacted and how they will be receiving personalized communications that matter, such as holiday deals or in-store promotions.

Build Segments that Help You Identify What Messages to Send to Which Customers (and When)

Once you have access to the necessary customer data, the next step is bringing it to life. Most traditional marketing tools require teams to manually export and import their customer data across multiple systems and spreadsheets which is incredibly time intensive.

Ascent360's platform automatically ingests and aggregates the customer data from POS, e-commerce, or other transactional systems into a single, easy-to-use platform. The platform also scrubs the data for any inaccuracies to create a "golden record" of every customer, making your data easier to segment into groups (e.g., male buyers who purchased merchandise over $1,000 in the last 12 months).

> **"People are always going to go shopping. A lot of our effort is just 'how do we make the retail experience a great one?'"**
>
> Phillip Green, Chairman, Arcadia Group

The power of segmenting your customers is truly understated — during the information search stage, it's important that customers receive messages that matter to them, will encourage them to engage with your brand, and help them make a purchase decision.

Keep in mind, the five stages of the purchase cycle don't only apply to new customers. Consider this:

- **65% of revenue comes from current customers**
- **It's 6 to 7 times more expensive to acquire a new customer than retain an existing one**
- **80% of revenue comes from 20% of your customers**

Segmenting your customers using Recency, Frequency, Monetary Value (RFM) scores can help identify those most valuable to your business growth. For example, VIP customers are those who have purchased recently, buy frequently, and spend the most.

The information search stage looks different for these types of customers, but it's just as important to get the right, highly personalized messages in front of them during their buying journey.

Send Personalized Messages Across Platforms for an Omnichannel Customer Experience

Enhancing your customers' buying experience doesn't stop at personalized emails — Ascent360 provides the comprehensive tools needed to send targeted campaigns to your audiences on Google, Instagram, Facebook, SMS, and direct mailers.

For data-driven marketing to be successful — and especially when your customers are in the alternative evaluation stage and may be considering other brands — consistency is key. Showing up where your customers spend most of their time, whether it's email, social media, or another avenue, allows you to stay top of mind in a relevant way. **According to Techipedia**, consistent brands are worth 20% more than those with inconsistencies in their messaging.

> " **Make a customer, not a sale.** "
>
> Katherine Barchetti,
> Founder, K. Barchetti Shops

facebook

Email

Direct Mail

Google

Instagram

Truly engaging your audience across channels is a result of consistency combined with the power of personalized messaging that will capture the attention of your customers and help you develop stronger, long-term relationships. The lifetime value of a customer is just as valuable as the monetary value of their last purchase — and the right engagement can bridge the gap between a one-time purchase and repeat customer.

Easily Automate Your Outreach to Engage Your Customers Throughout the Entire Lifecycle

One of the most common concerns retailers have with data-driven marketing is that it seems too difficult or will stretch their resources too thin. That's why the Ascent360 platform is stocked with an extensive library of tried-and-true campaign templates that are immediately ready to plug-and-play to your designated customer segments.

The importance of personalized engagement with your customers doesn't stop after the purchase decision is made — in fact, up to 50% of repeat purchases occur within 30 days of the first purchase. These automated campaigns (which we call "A360 Plays") ensure you don't miss out on massive opportunities to increase repeat purchases and long-term brand loyalty.

Some examples of high-impact A360 Plays for retailers include:

- **Welcome campaigns**
- **Post-purchase plays**
- **Lapsed customer plays**
- **Upsell and cross-sell opportunities**
- **Abandoned browse reminders**
- **Birthday, holiday, or promotional campaigns**
- **Web activity tracking of active/engaged prospects for more targeted promotions**

Lapsed Customer

Description
Providing timely emails will help avoid lengthy lapses between purchases

Impact
Existing customers typically account for 65% of revenue, so use their most recent transactional data to keep them... More

Activate Play

Post Purchase

Description
Build an automated stream to incentivize the next purchase

Impact
50% of repeat purchases happen within 30 days

Activate Play

These pre-built, automated, highly customizable campaigns allow companies to "set it and forget it" while still driving maximum results. One **recent client experience** using a return-traffic email campaign demonstrated:

- **41% of repeat sales within 30 days**
- **46% of prospects became customers within six months**
- **73% of revenue was driven by just 20% of customers**

Data-Driven Marketing is Most Impactful When You Can Track Your Results

Once a customer has made a purchase, it's critical to evaluate the effectiveness of your campaigns. Putting together the perfect marketing messages doesn't happen overnight. That's why it's important to be able to test your campaigns, determine what's working and what's not, and adjust your approach accordingly.

The Ascent360 platform provides intuitive "off the shelf" reporting that helps you optimize marketing spend, track sales and engagement, and identify impact on ROI based on which campaigns are over- or under-performing.

Revenue by channel   ⟶ Export

- Email: $9.8M
- Facebook: $6.2M
- Google: $5.48M
- Instagram: $3.75M
- Direct Mail: $2.85M
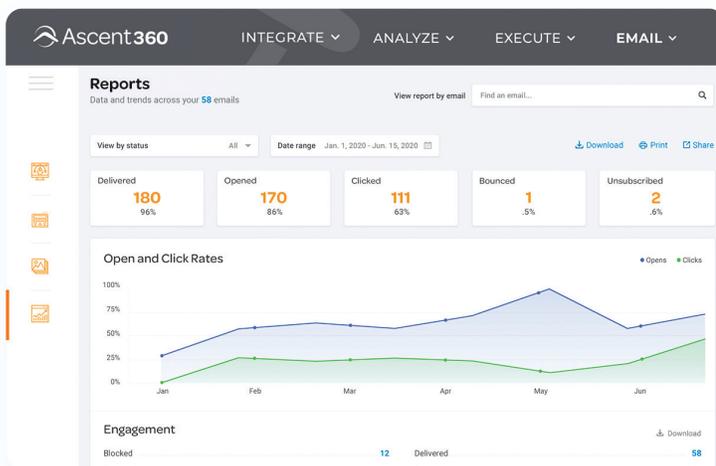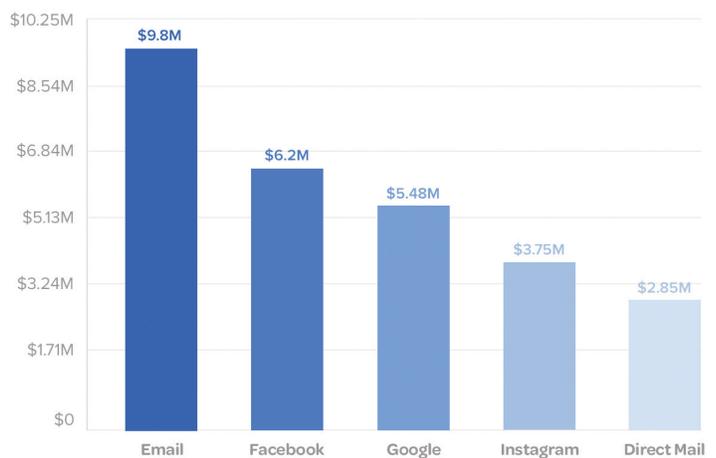
This detailed reporting includes the ability to track data such as:

- Time between purchases
- Campaign open, click, and bounce rates
- Sales and revenue increase or decrease

All it takes is a few clicks to review key performance indicators and adjust your strategy as necessary. Frequently analyzing and adapting your approach will ensure you continue to meet your customers where they are and gain long-term brand loyalty.

Before You Know It, You Will Be Sending Messages That Matter To All Your Customers and Building Stronger, Lifelong Relationships — and Doing It All For a Fraction of The Time and Cost of Traditional Marketing

The time you will save using sophisticated automated marketing will enable your team to focus more energy on things like customer service and in-person sales.

All five of these stages in the consumer purchasing cycle are important to consider in your marketing strategy, but you can also pick and choose what to emphasize and when based on your specific business goals. The most important thing is that by adopting a data-driven marketing strategy, you gain the ability to truly understand what drives your customers and fine-tune your marketing accordingly.

Ascent360 integrates with premier POS and eCommerce systems **including BigCommerce, Lightspeed** and **Shopify**. With just one click, you're able to easily and securely connect the data from your store.

Not using BigCommerce, Lightspeed or Shopify? Ascent360 integrates with, cleanses and enriches data from over 100 POS, e-commerce, lodging, booking and other systems.

If you're ready to take your marketing to the next level, contact us at **800.581.4017** or visit **ascent360.com/request-demo/** for a complimentary demo today. Unlock the power of your customer data and deliver personalized 1:1 messages at scale.