# CREATING OPTIMAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

Expert advice on advancing digital maturity in marketing organizations

Presented by **one**magnify INSIGHT TO IMPACT with CMS WIRE

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# Introduction

Digital transformation — the integration of technologies and the infusion of data into business models, processes and strategies to enhance productivity and efficiency — is essential for creating exceptional customer experiences.

With advancements in technology, particularly AI, the potential to understand customers and deliver personalized experiences has significantly increased, making digital transformation more urgent than ever. Organizations recognize that they must evolve to stay competitive. In fact, according to CMSWire, 81% of companies now consider delivering quality digital customer experiences to be essential or a top priority.

However, digital transformation is a complicated, ongoing pursuit. Many challenges stand in the way of this journey, including data management issues and legacy systems as well as organizational silos and skills gaps. Having a partner that can help build organizational bridges and accelerate technology innovation can keep organizations on the path to building excellent customer experiences, even as customer expectations grow increasingly complex!

To explore the challenges (and advantages) of digital transformation, CMSWire INSIGHTS — the research division of CMSWire — spoke to senior leaders at OneMagnify. The team shared their insights on where they see digital transformation headed and what it will take for organizations to build successful customer experiences in the future.

## MEET THE EXPERTS

**STEVE FARR, CHIEF DIGITAL OFFICER**

**REMA NASIF, MANAGING DIRECTOR, STRATEGY**

**JONATHAN PRANTNER, CHIEF ANALYTICS OFFICER**

**JENN BURNS, SENIOR DIRECTOR, DIGITAL MARKETING**

**KAMELIA DIANATI, CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER**

**JEREMY SUTTON, DIRECTOR, MARKETING, EXPERIENCE, AND AI**

# Bridging Silos and Working Cross-functionally

What does digital transformation success look like? The proliferation of devices means customers come to a brand from multiple touchpoints — often switching devices to do so. Organizations need to develop unified customer profiles to understand when Customer A comes in from either Device B or Device C.

It all starts with departments sharing data. "The companies having the best success with digital transformation are the ones with really good alignment between marketing and sales," said Steve Farr. "When data is shared, each department can really take advantage of all that digital data that AI is helping to collect — a wealth of customer information that can be used to make precise strategic decisions."

*"Data silos are one of the major reasons why organizations fail to deliver digital transformation. Without a unified customer view, you can't achieve even basic things like creating a single source of truth for CX measurement and optimization."*
**—Steve Farr, Chief Digital Officer**

Successful data sharing begins with building strong cross-functional teams, developing a culture of collaboration across the enterprise and breaking down silos where they occur. No small feat, especially considering that **limited cross-department alignment and collaboration** has been the top digital customer experience (DCX) challenge for survey respondents of CMSWire's *State of DCX* report for the last three years.

Shifting or differing priorities can hinder cross-functional work. "I think collaboration is something that many organizations aren't doing enough of," said Jenn Burns. "Everyone has different goals in their day-to-day work, and various teams, like analytics, technology, marketing, and sales, often are working on projects driven by their respective leadership. This can lead to friction, as these teams may not always be aligned and might not be working toward the same goals."

This is why having a strategic partner to cut through the silos is advantageous. "It's not just about being on the same page regarding goals and objectives," Jenn Burns said. "It's about bringing together diverse expertise from different departments, whether that's marketing, sales, tech or data science. Understanding the insights that each team provides helps you minimize friction points in the customer experience — so you don't have 20 different teams going off on 20 different initiatives. This is one of OneMagnify's strengths; we're able to come in and be a strategic partner for organizations that need help getting everyone working together." When departments work together they can achieve the ultimate goal — happy and loyal customers.

For over 13 years, Whirlpool Corporation has counted on OneMagnify to activate customer relationship marketing (CRM) programs that drive sales and revenue across its multiple brands. It starts by leveraging internal and external data to understand who their customers are, then building predictive in-market models to deliver the right mix of content at the right stage in their purchase decision journey. Through consistent CRM, the client had earned $33.5 million in revenue with a 10:1 return on investment on campaigns during the 2022 calendar year.

# Strategic Incorporation of AI Tools

It's no surprise that AI will play a key role in future digital transformations. It can significantly improve customer experience by enabling better self-service, freeing staff for higher-level tasks, improving customer retention and resolving first customer experiences faster.

Despite widespread adoption in the last two years, organizations still have a long way to go until the hype matches reality. While 30% of organizations expect AI to have a transformative impact on the digital customer experience, only 11% use AI extensively in their CX strategy, according to CMSWire research.

One of AI's chief advantages is its ability to discover valuable insights in vast customer datasets, which might be overwhelming or impossible for a human to uncover.

AI adoption can help teams work cross functionally and break down departmental

**"My goal is to get AI to where it's so intrinsic in everything that we do that it becomes seamless — people won't even feel it's there." —Jonathan Prantner, Chief Analytics Officer**

silos. Jeremy Sutton gave an example from his own team. "When one of our team members finds an effective AI tool, we make each other aware of it and do cross-training on its capabilities. This helps us scale up and out as we transform our operational processes. It also treats process improvements as a team sport, providing a great deal of value."

Adopting AI just for the sake of it does no good. "Being able to demonstrate the ROI and aligning it with your business objectives will help you gather senior leadership buy-in for new technology initiatives," said Jonathan Prantner.

OneMagnify is working closely with an automotive original equipment manufacturer (OEM) to build an AI-driven application that creates a more effective and efficient experience for its 3,000 dealers, auto owners and potential buyers. This initiative helps dealers make smarter decisions by bringing together data that is spread across a dozen systems and generating predictive, AI-powered insights. With a more intelligent profile of the customer, the client can deliver more consistent, relevant communications wherever the customer might interact with the brand or the dealer network.

# How to Excel at Omnichannel and Hyper-personalization

Omnichannel is a given these days — many customers watch TV with their laptops open while scrolling their smartphones at the same time. With customers researching, reacting and interacting with your brand from different devices, organizations need a solid omnichannel strategy to ensure they're effectively reaching these customers.

"Your organization needs to take a holistic view of your customer journey for optimal omnichannel orchestration," Steve Farr said. "Deploying AI and personalization across multiple devices seamlessly requires a sizable technology investment, and you could easily face roadblocks if your systems and data are siloed."

"Successful omnichannel is more than just launching tactics simultaneously. It demands a cohesive and integrated strategy that ensures a seamless customer experience across all touchpoints." —Jenn Burns, Senior Director, Digital Marketing

Omnichannel delivery is crucial for meeting customers where they are, but there's evidence that many companies haven't mastered it yet. According to Salesforce research, although 74% of business buyers expect companies to offer an omnichannel experience, only 27% of B2B companies deliver a consistent experience across channels.

According to Forrester research, 76% of B2B buyers expect marketers and salespeople to deliver more personalized attention. And yet, this is another area where organizations struggle. Only 20% say they've derived benefits from personalization, according to data from CMSWire's annual *State of DCX* report. The report goes on to say that effective use of personalization is directly tied to an organization's digital maturity. When digital tools work well, the percentage of companies benefiting from personalization increases from 20% to 34%. However, for those with ineffective digital tools, the percentage of organizations with successful personalization outcomes is only 8%.
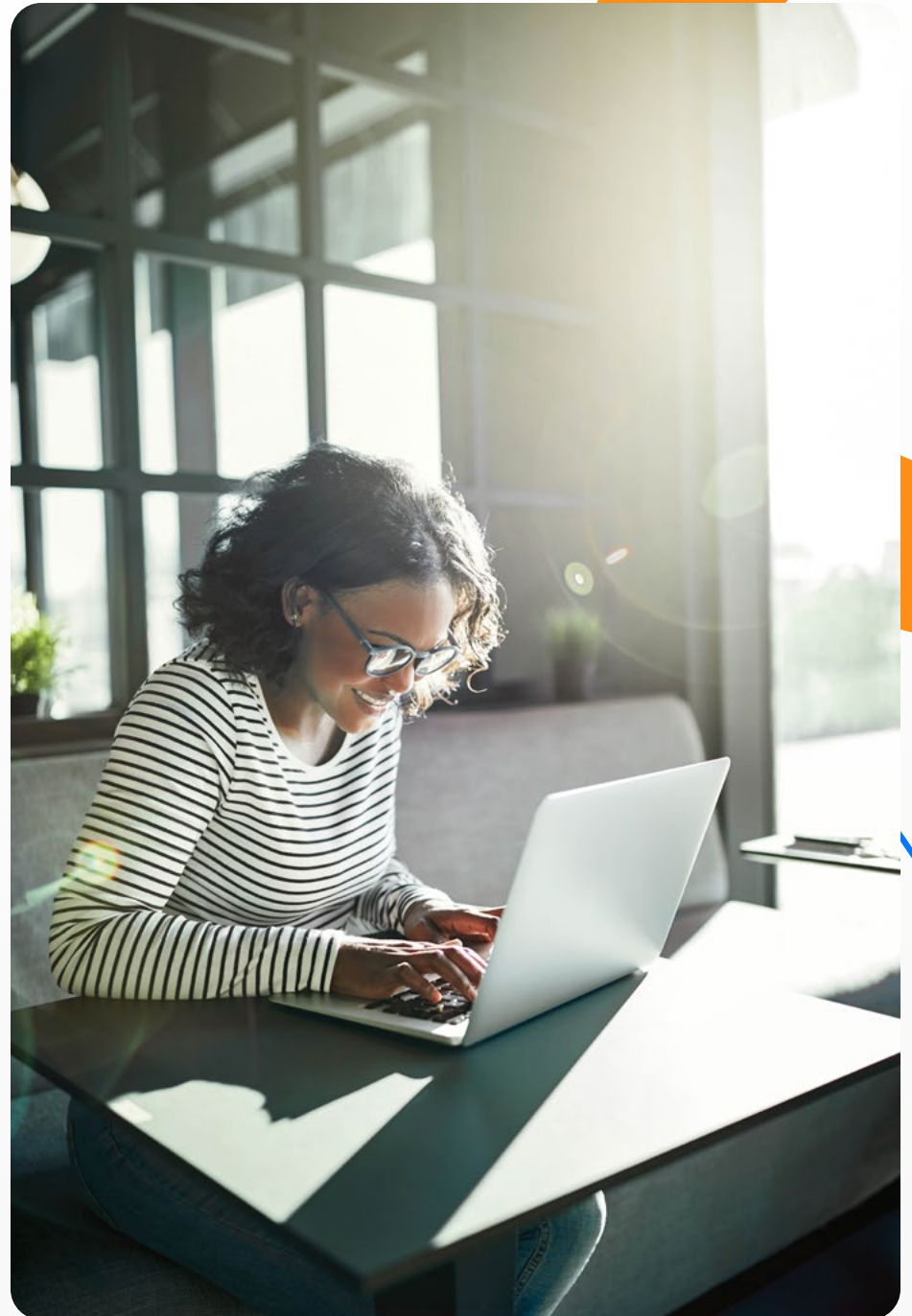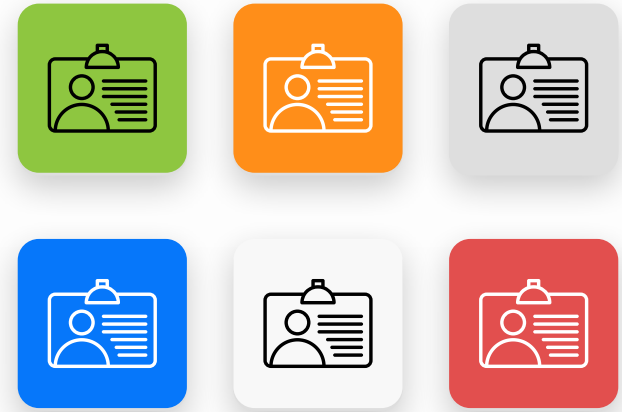
As your organization implements personalization strategies, it's crucial to update your customer personas. "Getting to know your customers is at the heart of marketing and digital transformations. Customer personas are ways to understand your current and desired customer base, from what they want to experience with a brand and product, to what channels they want to get that information from," said Rema Nasif, Managing Director, Strategy. "It's important to keep those personas current to reflect changing customer sentiment and market trends and even adjust for new players and competition."

"No matter where you are in your digital transformation, your end goal should be to delight the customer," said Kamelia Dianati. "You want your product users to be satisfied and become lifelong customers. Ultimately, the aim is to attract new customers while strengthening relationships with existing ones."

To streamline and better personalize its marketing strategy across multiple channels, Navistar turned to OneMagnify to develop an integrated cross-brand and business unit CRM program for its primary vehicle brands and aftermarket service solutions. OneMagnify implemented a campaign system, incorporating effective management, centralization and optimization of email as well as paid and owned media programs across all brands and business units. The campaign resulted in a **10% increase in subscriber list growth and 80% improvement in overall email engagement.**

# Conclusion

"Don't pursue technology for its own sake. Your goals should include a clear understanding of what you aim to accomplish. Additionally, partner with technology experts who can provide you with options and recommendations." **—Kamelia Dianati, Chief Technology Officer**

Successful digital transformation requires a strategic approach, collaboration across departments, and effective use of advanced technologies like AI. The challenges are significant — from breaking down silos to crafting a seamless omnichannel experience — but the rewards are substantial. Companies that succeed in these areas not only enhance their customer experience but also build stronger, more agile organizations poised for long-term success.

It's never too late for organizations to start digital transformation. "If you're coming in late, at the very least have a general transformation strategy," said Jeremy Sutton. "It's game-changing, and can allow you to do a lot if you wield it correctly, such as using platforms that help you achieve more efficiency in your daily workflows."

Improving the CX journey starts by listening to your customers. Understanding their position in the buying cycle and their triggers helps when crafting strategies to address those needs. "You need to understand your customers, especially if you're transitioning from physical sales to the digital space," Kamelia Dianati explained. "It's important to envision what that transformation will look like to ensure your digital transformation truly enhances the customer experience, rather than disrupting what already works well."

The future of digital transformation is here, and those who embrace it with agility and innovation will distinguish themselves in the competitive marketplace. The path to digital transformation requires continuous adaptation, strategic planning and a focus on the customer. Leveraging the expertise and insights of leaders in the field, organizations can navigate this landscape and emerge as industry vanguards.
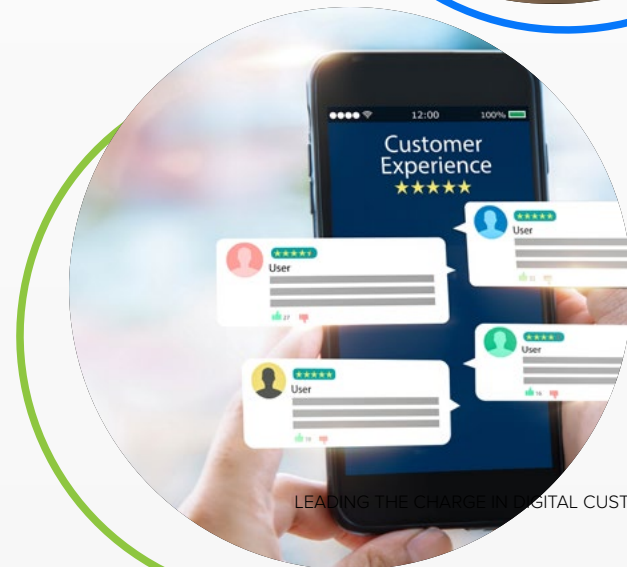
# Appendix

This whitepaper is based on interviews with OneMagnify's senior leaders held in June and July 2024.

# About

OneMagnify helps the world's leading brands transform customer experiences through digital transformation. We drive personalization at scale through data-driven, AI-enhanced, and technology-enabled marketing solutions. With more than 50 years of creative brand-building experience and deep industry vertical expertise, we excel at magnifying brands across digital channels, offer measurable results, and set our clients apart from competitors. Our more than 700 marketing, technology, analytics and AI experts execute digital activation strategies with best-in-class technology platforms and co-innovation that delivers optimal experiences for your customers. Founded in 1967, OneMagnify is located in Detroit, MI; Ann Arbor, MI, Wilmington, DE; Charlotte, NC; Cologne, Germany, and Chennai, India. For more information visit OneMagnify.com.

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Our obsessions: next generation digital customer experiences, navigating the r/evolution of work and advancing enterprise learning.

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