

A MARKETING GEEK'S GUIDE TO:

OPTIMIZEZELY EXPERIMENTATION AND PERSONALIZATION





ABOUT THIS SERIES

There is a lot that goes into your marketing strategy, and it's not something you should go at alone. Lucky for you, our experts have you covered. At Relationship One, our mission is to "Inspire Success." We hope that reading through this eBook will inspire you to try something new, solve a problem you've been dealing with, or invent something that will take your marketing efforts to the next level.

Let our experts help you dive into an area of modern marketing that you're curious about and let the inspiration flood in.

A MARKETING GEEK'S GUIDE: OPTIMIZEZELY EXPERIMENTATION AND PERSONALIZATION

Behind every high-performing campaign is a series of bold tests and smart adjustments. Optimizely Experimentation and Personalization tools makes it possible to dream bigger, validate faster, and create personalized experiences at scale. As you explore this Geek Guide, we hope you'll find inspiration to reimagine your marketing playbook and embrace the power of experimentation and personalization.





CHAPTER 1: GETTING STARTED WITH OPTIMIZEZY WEB EXPERIMENTATION

LAYING THE FOUNDATION: A GUIDE TO PLANNING FOR OPTIMIZEZY WEB EXPERIMENTATION

Consumer behavior has undergone a fundamental transformation, and digital platforms now serve as the primary arena for brand discovery, in-depth product research, and final purchase decisions. This evolution demands that businesses prioritize personalized engagement, tailoring their online presence to meet the specific needs and preferences of their target audience. Optimizely Web Experimentation directly addresses this need by empowering businesses to conduct data-driven website optimization. By analyzing real user behavior, Optimizely facilitates the continuous testing and refinement of website elements, ensuring that every interaction is relevant, engaging, and ultimately, conducive to conversion.

As businesses embark on their Optimizely journey, establishing a well-defined experimentation framework is paramount. This strategic foundation is essential for maximizing the impact of testing efforts, ensuring scalability as experimentation programs grow. To effectively leverage Optimizely, we must meticulously lay the groundwork. This involves constructing a robust experimentation program, one that encompasses the systematic generation of testable hypotheses grounded in user data and business objectives. Furthermore, we must prioritize the strategic organization of experiments, ensuring that each test is designed and executed to yield actionable insights and drive tangible results. By focusing on these critical components, businesses can unlock the full potential of Optimizely and cultivate a sustainable culture of online optimization.

STAGE 1: BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR EXPERIMENTATION SUCCESS

Before embarking on the journey of A/B testing and personalization, it is crucial to establish a robust and well-defined groundwork for your experimentation program. This critical pre-launch phase serves as the bedrock upon which all subsequent optimization efforts will flourish. A solid foundation ensures that your experimentation initiatives are not merely isolated tests, but rather, strategically aligned with overarching business objectives. By meticulously planning and structuring your program, you create a framework that fosters a culture of data-driven decision-making, where hypotheses are grounded in user behavior and results are rigorously analyzed. This foundational work involves defining clear goals, establishing key performance indicators (KPIs), outlining a standardized testing process, and securing buy-in from key stakeholders. Without this deliberate preparation, experimentation can quickly become haphazard and ineffective, leading to wasted resources and missed opportunities. Investing time and effort in building a strong foundation will ultimately empower your organization to leverage A/B testing and personalization to drive meaningful improvements in user experience, conversion rates, and overall business performance.

START WITH A GOAL TREE

Without a strategic direction, testing efforts become fragmented and lack the focus necessary to drive meaningful results. This is precisely where the power of a goal tree becomes important. A goal tree is a strategic framework that provides a clear and hierarchical representation of your organization's business objectives. It meticulously breaks down these broad goals into smaller, more manageable and measurable components. This granular approach allows for a deeper understanding of the intricate relationships between various initiatives and their contribution to the overall success of the business. By visually illustrating how each component connects and contributes to the larger picture, a goal tree provides a roadmap for your experimentation program, ensuring that every test is aligned with strategic objectives and ultimately drives tangible, measurable progress towards your desired outcomes.

For instance, let's say your primary goal is to boost online revenue. This overarching goal can be branched out into secondary goals like:

- **Increase conversion rates:** Optimize landing pages, product pages, and the checkout funnel to drive more purchases.
- **Elevate average order value:** Implement cross-selling, upselling, and promotional strategies to encourage customers to spend more.
- **Drive repeat purchases:** Foster customer loyalty through personalized recommendations, loyalty programs, and targeted email campaigns.

Each of these secondary goals can then be further deconstructed into specific, measurable metrics such as:

- **Click-through rates (CTR):** Measure the effectiveness of calls-to-action, banners, and links.
- **Add-to-cart rates:** Track how many users are adding products to their shopping carts.
- **Time spent on page:** Assess user engagement and identify potential areas for improvement in content and layout.

By crafting this goal tree, you create a roadmap for your experimentation program, ensuring that every test you run is directly linked to a tangible business outcome. This strategic alignment is essential for demonstrating the value of experimentation and securing buy-in from stakeholders.

CREATE AN EXPERIMENTATION CHARTER

An experimentation charter serves as a document that outlines the purpose, scope, and operational guidelines for all experimentation activities. This charter acts as a strategic compass, guiding the entire program towards its intended objectives. By clearly defining the boundaries of experimentation, specifying the types of tests to be conducted, and establishing the processes for data analysis and decision-making, the charter provides a structured framework for all involved. With everyone adhering to the same set of principles and guidelines, the experimentation charter ensures that all efforts are coordinated, consistent, and contribute to the achievement of shared goals.

Key elements of an effective experimentation charter include:

- **Mission statement:** Clearly articulate the purpose of your experimentation program and how it contributes to overall business goals.
- **Scope:** Define the areas of your website or app that are open for experimentation, as well as any limitations or exclusions.
- **Roles and responsibilities:** Clearly outline the roles of each team member involved in the experimentation process, from ideation to analysis.
- **Decision-making process:** Establish a clear framework for how experiment ideas are generated, prioritized, and approved.
- **Ethical considerations:** Define guidelines for conducting ethical experiments that respect user privacy and data security.
- **Communication plan:** Outline how experiment results will be shared with stakeholders and used to inform future decisions.

By creating a comprehensive experimentation charter, you foster transparency, accountability, and a shared understanding of the experimentation process. This sets the stage for a successful and sustainable program that drives real business value.

BUILD YOUR TEAM

To unlock the full potential of optimization, organizations must assemble a diverse team, one that brings together a rich blend of skills, perspectives, and experiences. This multifaceted team is crucial for both the generation of truly innovative ideas and the execution of impactful tests. The complexity of modern digital experiences demands a holistic understanding, which can only be achieved through the integration of various areas of expertise. Therefore, your ideal experimentation team should consist of individuals with proven capabilities and deep knowledge in the following key areas:

- **Data Analysis:** These are your data detectives, responsible for uncovering insights from website analytics, identifying areas for optimization, and measuring the impact of experiments. They are fluent in the language of data and can translate complex metrics into actionable recommendations.
- **UX Design:** UX designers are the champions of user experience, ensuring that experiments are designed with the user in mind. They bring a deep understanding of user behavior, usability principles, and visual design to create compelling and effective test variations.
- **Web Development:** Your web developers are the technical wizards who bring experiments to life. They ensure that tests are implemented seamlessly, without disrupting the user experience or compromising website performance.
- **Project Management:** Project managers are the orchestrators of the experimentation program, overseeing the entire process from ideation to analysis. They keep things on track, ensure deadlines are met, and facilitate communication between team members.

In addition to these core roles, you might also consider including specialists in areas like content marketing and product management, depending on the specific needs of your business.

USE A CHECKLIST

To ensure a seamless and efficient deployment of its platform, Optimizely provides a suite of comprehensive implementation checklists. These detailed guides are designed to navigate users through the technical setup process, minimizing potential roadblocks and maximizing the platform's functionality from the outset. These checklists cover essential steps such as:

- **Installing the Optimizely snippet:** This snippet of code is the foundation of Optimizely, enabling it to track user behavior and deliver personalized experiences.
- **Configuring integrations:** Connect Optimizely with other tools in your marketing stack, such as analytics platforms, CRM systems, and email marketing providers.
- **Setting up tracking:** Define the key metrics you want to track and ensure that Optimizely is capturing the right data for your experiments.

By following these checklists, you can ensure that Optimizely is implemented correctly and that your data is accurate and reliable. This technical foundation is crucial for running successful experiments and generating meaningful insights.

STAGE 2: GENERATE HYPOTHESES TO MEET YOUR GOALS

This stage demands a strategic blend of data-driven insights and innovative thinking to pinpoint strong opportunities for optimization. It's a process where the "art" of creative ideation meets the "science" of data analysis, culminating in hypotheses that are both imaginative and grounded in reality. This is where the rubber meets the road, transforming strategic planning into tangible, actionable experiments.

Business intelligence (BI) reporting serves as a window into the behaviors of your website users, providing data that can be mined for valuable insights. By leveraging the power of BI tools, you can gain a comprehensive understanding of website traffic patterns, user engagement metrics, and conversion funnels. This analysis allows you to identify specific areas within the user experience that may be causing friction or hindering desired outcomes. By scrutinizing user journeys, pinpointing drop-off points, and analyzing interaction patterns, you can uncover hidden opportunities for improvement. These insights enable you to formulate hypotheses that are not only based on data, but also directly address the specific needs and behaviors of your target audience.

Here are some examples of how BI reporting can spark experiment ideas:

- **High bounce rate on a landing page:** This could indicate that the page isn't relevant to the user's search query, the content isn't engaging, or the design is confusing. Experiment with different headlines, visuals, and calls to action to see if you can improve engagement.
- **Low conversion rate in the checkout process:** This might suggest that the checkout flow is too complex, users are encountering technical issues, or they lack trust in the payment process. Test different checkout designs, payment options, and security badges to identify friction points and optimize conversions.
- **High cart abandonment rate:** This could be due to unexpected shipping costs, a complicated checkout process, or a lack of payment options. Experiment with free shipping offers, guest checkout options, and alternative payment methods to reduce cart abandonment.

By asking the right questions and digging deep into your BI data, you can uncover hidden opportunities for optimization and generate hypotheses for impactful experiments.

While BI reporting provides a high-level overview of website performance, data and analytics tools allow you to delve deeper into user behavior and identify specific areas for improvement. These tools provide a wealth of information on how users interact with your website, including:

- **Heatmaps and scroll maps:** Visualize where users are clicking, scrolling, and hovering on your pages, revealing areas of interest and potential distractions.
- **Session recordings:** Watch recordings of real user sessions to see how they navigate your website, identify pain points, and understand their behavior.
- **User segmentation:** Analyze user behavior based on demographics, device type, location, and other factors to identify patterns and tailor your experiments.

By leveraging these data and analytics tools, you can gain a deeper understanding of your users and generate more targeted and effective experiment ideas.

CRAFTING HYPOTHESES

At the heart of every successful experiment lies a well-defined hypothesis, a clear and concise statement that serves as the foundation for your test. This hypothesis is not merely a guess; it represents a carefully formulated prediction about the outcome of your proposed changes. It acts as a guiding principle, directing the design and execution of your experiment and providing a framework for analyzing the results. A robust hypothesis transforms vague ideas into testable assumptions, ensuring that your experimentation efforts are focused and purposeful. To maximize its effectiveness, a well-crafted hypothesis should adhere to specific criteria:

- **Specific:** Clearly state what you are testing and what you expect to happen.
- **Measurable:** Define how you will measure the success of your experiment, using specific metrics and targets.
- **Achievable:** Ensure that your hypothesis is realistic and attainable, given your resources and constraints.
- **Relevant:** Align your hypothesis with your business goals and ensure that it addresses a real user need or pain point.
- **Time-bound:** Specify a timeframe for your experiment to ensure that you can collect enough data to draw meaningful conclusions.

Here are some examples of well-defined hypotheses:

- "Changing the call-to-action button color from blue to red will increase click-through rates by 10% within two weeks."
- "Adding customer testimonials to the product page will increase conversions by 5% within one month."
- "Simplifying the checkout process by reducing the number of steps will decrease cart abandonment by 3% within two weeks."

By formulating clear and testable hypotheses, you set the stage for successful experiments that generate meaningful insights and drive business value.

STAGE 3: STRUCTURE EXPERIMENTS FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT

This next step involves organizing and prioritizing your hypotheses to ensure maximum impact and efficiency. This stage necessitates the development of a comprehensive roadmap for your entire experimentation program. This roadmap will serve as a dynamic guide, outlining the sequence of tests, defining key performance indicators for each experiment, and ensuring that all tests are designed and executed with statistical rigor. This planning process transforms a collection of ideas into a cohesive and actionable strategy, allowing you to optimize your resources and drive meaningful results.

While every experiment offers the potential for learning, some have the capacity to generate transformative improvements, while others may yield only incremental gains. To effectively allocate resources and achieve the greatest possible impact, a robust prioritization framework is critical. This framework should enable you to systematically evaluate the potential value of each experiment, considering factors such as the potential for improvement, the cost of implementation, and the strategic alignment with overall business objectives. By prioritizing experiments based on their potential value, you can ensure that your efforts are focused on the initiatives that are most likely to deliver significant and sustainable results. This strategic approach maximizes the return on your experimentation investment and accelerates your progress towards achieving your optimization goals.

A simple yet effective prioritization framework considers the following factors:

- **Potential impact:** How much could this experiment improve your key metrics and contribute to your business goals?
- **Ease of implementation:** How much time and effort will it take to implement this experiment?
- **Confidence in the hypothesis:** How confident are you that this experiment will produce the desired results?

By focusing on high-impact, low-effort experiments with strong hypotheses, you can maximize your learning and achieve faster results.

DESIGN AN EXPERIMENTATION ROADMAP

An experimentation roadmap serves as the visual and strategic backbone of your optimization efforts. This roadmap acts as a dynamic blueprint, providing a clear and coherent framework for your testing initiatives. By visualizing the progression of experiments, you gain a holistic understanding of your optimization strategy, ensuring that tests are conducted in a structured, systematic, and logical order. This minimizes the risk of overlapping or conflicting tests, allowing for a more efficient and effective allocation of resources. Furthermore, the roadmap facilitates effective communication and collaboration among team members, ensuring that everyone is aligned with the overall testing plan and contributing to the achievement of shared goals. By providing a clear and accessible overview of your experimentation strategy, the roadmap empowers you to proactively manage your optimization efforts and drive continuous improvement.

Your roadmap should include:

- **Experiment title and description:** Clearly identify each experiment and its objective.
- **Hypothesis:** State the expected outcome of the experiment.
- **Key metrics:** Define the primary, secondary, and monitoring goals for each experiment.
- **Timeline:** Specify the start and end dates for each experiment.
- **Resources:** Identify the team members and resources required for each experiment.

By creating a detailed experimentation roadmap, you can ensure that your optimization efforts are aligned with your business goals and that you are continuously learning and improving.

THE MINIMUM DETECTABLE EFFORT (MDE): ENSURING STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Minimum Detectable Effect (MDE) represents the smallest effect size, or the minimum change in your key metric, that your experiment is designed to reliably detect. Put simply, it's the threshold of change that you can confidently attribute to the changes you've implemented in your experiment, rather than attributing it to the inherent variability of random chance. Understanding and defining the MDE allows you to establish a clear benchmark for success, ensuring that your experiment is capable of discerning meaningful changes from statistical noise.

By determining the MDE, you are assessing the statistical power of your experiment, which is its ability to detect a true effect if one exists. If your experiment lacks sufficient power to detect a meaningful change, you run the significant risk of wasting valuable time, resources, and effort on a test that ultimately yields inconclusive or misleading results. This pre-experiment calculation allows you to fine-tune your experimental design, adjust sample sizes, and optimize your testing parameters, ultimately maximizing the likelihood of obtaining statistically sound and actionable insights.

Optimizely provides tools and resources to help you calculate the MDE for your experiments, ensuring that your tests are designed for success.

DEFINING YOUR GOALS: PRIMARY, SECONDARY, AND MONITORING METRICS

Before embarking on the execution of any experiment, an important step lies in the definition of clear, measurable metrics for assessing its success. This process ensures that your experimentation efforts are focused, purposeful, and ultimately, capable of delivering actionable insights. These metrics are directly linked with Optimizely's calculations and Stats Engine, so it's important to be intentional in their selection. This involves a strategic identification of:

- **Primary metric:** The key metric that you aim to improve with this experiment. This is the most important metric to track and should be directly aligned with your business objectives.
- **Secondary metrics:** Additional metrics that may be impacted by the experiment. These can provide valuable insights into the overall effect of your changes.
- **Monitoring metrics:** Metrics that you want to keep an eye on to ensure that the experiment doesn't negatively impact other important aspects of your website or app.

Selecting the right metrics is paramount to accurately measuring the impact of your tests and driving meaningful results. Optimizely's platform empowers businesses across various revenue models to track a diverse range of metrics, ensuring that every experiment aligns with strategic objectives. Whether you're focused on driving conversions, increasing engagement, or maximizing revenue, understanding which metrics to prioritize is essential for informed decision-making. Optimizely offers resources and guidance on selecting the most relevant metrics for your business model, ensuring that your experiments are focused on driving the right outcomes.

CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF EXPERIMENTATION FOR CONTINUOUS GROWTH

Embarking on the Optimizely Web Experimentation journey is not merely about adopting a tool; it's about embracing a philosophy of continuous improvement and data-driven decision-making. By meticulously planning and executing these initial stages, you cultivate a fertile ground for optimization, where innovation flourishes and user experiences are constantly refined.

The goal tree provides a strategic compass, the experimentation charter ensures alignment and transparency, and the multidisciplinary team brings a symphony of skills to the table. Through data-driven ideation, strategically crafted hypotheses, and a structured experimentation roadmap, you unlock the true potential of Optimizely and transform your digital presence into a dynamic engine of growth.



CHAPTER 2:

TEN STEPS TO BUILDING SUCCESSFUL OPTIMIZEZY WEB EXPERIMENTS

As we saw in Chapter 1, creating and launching an effective A/B or multivariate test involves a meticulous process of strategizing, planning, and defining the structures needed for success. In this chapter, we will dive deeper into the details of delivery, reviewing all of the steps required to configure an experiment, and the process of fully leveraging the capabilities of Web Experimentation.

In our previous chapter, we reviewed why the ideation and planning stages for Optimizely Web Experimentation are crucial for ensuring tests are strategic and aligned with business objectives. You begin with defining clear, measurable goals, such as increasing checkout completion rates or improving user engagement on key landing pages. Based on these goals, the team develops specific, testable hypotheses – educated guesses about how changing an element (e.g., headline, button, layout) might impact user behavior to achieve the desired outcome. Since resources are limited, prioritizing experiments using frameworks like ICE (Impact, Confidence, Ease) or PIE (Potential, Importance, Ease) is essential to focus on ideas with the highest expected return. Finally, crafting the right team, typically involving stakeholders from marketing, product, design, development, and analytics, ensures the necessary skills and perspectives are available to design, build, launch, and interpret experiments effectively, fostering a collaborative culture of optimization.

Once you have a solid charter in place, the next step is to convert your plans into concrete experiments within Optimizely. Here are ten steps to get you up and running.

1. CREATING A NEW EXPERIMENT

The first action within Optimizely is to create a new experiment. Typically, this involves clicking a button labeled “Create New” or a similar call to action, followed by selecting “Experiment.” You will then be prompted to give your experiment a descriptive and easily understandable name. This name should reflect the core change being tested and perhaps a brief identifier. For instance, “Product Page CTA Test – Buy Now vs. Learn More” is a clear and informative name.

After naming the experiment, you’ll usually be presented with options regarding the experiment type. Optimizely supports various types, including A/B tests (testing one variable with two or more variations), multivariate tests (testing multiple variables simultaneously), and personalization campaigns. For a standard A/B test focusing on a single element like a button, you would select the A/B test option.



2. DEFINING THE PAGES

The Pages section is crucial for specifying where your experiment will run. You need to tell Optimizely which URLs or URL patterns should trigger the experiment for your website visitors. This ensures that only the intended users on the designated pages will be included in the test.

Optimizely offers several ways to define Pages:

- **Exact URL:** This is used when the experiment should run on a single, specific page. You would enter the full URL of that page (e.g., `example.com/product/123`).
- **URL Contains:** This option allows you to target a group of pages that share a common string in their URL. For example, entering `/blog/` would target all pages within the blog section of your website.
- **URL Matches Regex:** This provides the most flexibility, allowing you to use regular expressions to define complex URL patterns. This is useful for targeting pages with dynamic URLs or specific structures.
- **URL Starts With:** This targets all pages whose URLs begin with a specified string (e.g., `cart.example.com`).
- **URL Ends With:** This targets all pages whose URLs end with a specified string (e.g., `.html`).

When configuring Pages, it's essential to be precise. Incorrectly defined pages can lead to the experiment running on unintended parts of your website, skewing your results and potentially impacting user experience negatively. You can often add multiple page targeting rules to ensure comprehensive coverage of the desired areas.

3. CREATING VARIATIONS

The Variations section is where you define the different versions of the element or page you are testing. In an A/B test, you will typically have a “Original” (the control) and one or more variations.

To create a Variation, you click an “Add Variation” button. You will then be prompted to give the variation a name that clearly describes the change being implemented (e.g., “CTA – Buy Now”).

Once the Variation is created, you need to use Optimizely's visual editor (or code editor, depending on your preference and the complexity of the changes) to make the desired modifications. The visual editor allows you to point and click on elements of the page and change their text, color, size, position, and more, without needing to write code. For more complex changes involving structural modifications or JavaScript interactions, you might need to use the code editor.

For our example hypothesis, you would navigate to the product page within the visual editor (or target the specific element using CSS selectors in the code editor) and change the text of the primary call-to-action button in the “CTA – Buy Now” variation from “Learn More” to “Buy Now.”

You can create multiple Variations to test different approaches simultaneously. For instance, you might have a third Variation with the button text “Add to Cart.” However, remember that increasing the number of variations will require more traffic to achieve statistical significance within a reasonable timeframe.

4. DEFINING EVENTS

Events in Optimizely are the user interactions you want to track as part of your experiment. These are the actions that indicate whether a user is moving towards your desired outcome. Common Events include button clicks, form submissions, page views (of specific confirmation pages), video plays, and downloads.

To define an Event, you typically click an “Add Event” button and give it a descriptive name (e.g., “Purchase Completed”). You then need to specify how Optimizely should track this Event. This can be done in several ways:

- **Track Clicks on Element:** You can target a specific HTML element (like a button or a link) and track when users click on it. This usually involves using CSS selectors to identify the element.
- **Track Page Views:** You can track when users view a specific page, often a thank-you or confirmation page that signifies the completion of a goal. You would define this using the same URL matching rules as in the “Pages” section.
- **Custom Events:** For more complex tracking scenarios, you can implement custom JavaScript code that triggers an Optimizely event when a specific action occurs. This requires some coding knowledge but offers greater flexibility.

For our example, the primary Event would be “Purchase Completed,” which would likely be tracked as a page view of the order confirmation page or through a custom event triggered by the successful completion of the purchase process.

It’s crucial to accurately define and implement your Events, as these are the data points that will be used to measure the performance of your variations. You should test your event tracking thoroughly to ensure it’s firing correctly before launching your experiment.

5. SETTING UP METRICS

Metrics are the quantifiable measures you will use to evaluate the success of your experiment. They are derived from the Events you have defined. A Metric typically represents the conversion rate of a specific Event.

To create a Metric, you click an “Add Metric” button in your experiment and give it a clear name (e.g., “Purchase Conversion Rate”). You then need to associate it with one or more of the Events you have already defined. For our example, the “Purchase Conversion Rate” metric would be linked to the “Purchase Completed” event.

Optimizely allows you to define primary and secondary metrics. The primary metric is the main measure of success for your experiment, directly tied to your hypothesis. Secondary metrics are other indicators you want to monitor to understand the broader impact of your changes. For instance, while the primary metric might be purchase conversion rate, you might also track metrics like product page views or the number of users who proceed to the checkout process as secondary indicators.

You can also define how the metric should be calculated (e.g., unique conversions vs. total conversions) and its direction of improvement (increase or decrease).

6. DEFINING AUDIENCES

Audiences allow you to target your experiment to specific groups of visitors based on various criteria. This ensures that your experiment is only shown to the users you are interested in studying.

Optimizely offers a wide range of audience targeting options:

- **Behavioral Targeting:** Based on past actions on your website, such as the number of pages viewed, specific products viewed, or previous purchases.
- **Demographic Targeting:** Based on inferred or known demographic information (if available), such as location, age, or gender.
- **Technological Targeting:** Based on the visitor’s browser, operating system, device type (desktop, mobile, tablet), or screen resolution.
- **Traffic Source Targeting:** Based on how the visitor arrived at your website (e.g., direct traffic, search engines, social media, specific campaigns).
- **Custom Attributes:** You can pass custom data about your users to Optimizely (e.g., logged-in status, customer segment, subscription level) and use this for targeting.

To create an audience, you click an “Create New Audience” button and then define the rules based on the available criteria. You can combine multiple rules to create highly specific audience segments.

In our example, if our hypothesis specifically targets users who have viewed at least three product pages, we would create an Audience based on this behavioral criterion. Applying this audience to our experiment would ensure that only these users are included in the test.

7. CONFIGURING EXPERIMENT SETTINGS

Beyond the core components of Pages, Variations, Events, Metrics, and Audiences, there are several other important settings to configure for your experiment:

- **Traffic Allocation:** You need to decide what percentage of eligible visitors should be included in the experiment. You can start with a smaller percentage (e.g., 25% or 50%) to monitor the initial impact before rolling it out to a larger audience. You also need to determine how the traffic should be split between the original and the variations. For an A/B test with one variation, you would typically split the traffic evenly (e.g., 50% to the original, 50% to the variation).
- **Goals:** While metrics define how success is measured, goals provide a high-level overview of what you are trying to achieve with the experiment. You can associate your primary metric with a goal (e.g., “Increase Purchase Conversion Rate”).
- **Integration Settings:** Optimizely integrates with various analytics platforms (like Google Analytics), allowing you to send experiment data to these tools for more in-depth analysis. You should ensure these integrations are properly configured.
- **Scheduling:** You can set a start and end date and time for your experiment. This is useful for running tests during specific periods, such as marketing campaigns or seasonal events.

8. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND TESTING

Before launching your experiment to live traffic, thorough quality assurance (QA) is essential. This involves:

- Verifying that the variations appear correctly on the targeted pages across different browsers and devices.
- Ensuring that the event tracking is firing accurately when the defined user actions are performed.
- Checking that the audience targeting rules are working as expected and that only the intended users are seeing the experiment.
- Testing any custom JavaScript code to ensure it's functioning without errors.

Optimizely provides preview modes and QA tools to help with this process. You should also involve other team members in the QA process to get different perspectives and catch any potential issues.

9. LAUNCHING THE EXPERIMENT

Once you are confident that everything is configured correctly and the QA process is complete, you can launch your experiment. This involves changing the experiment status from “Draft” or “Inactive” to “Running.”

10. MONITORING AND ANALYSIS

Allow your experiment to run for a sufficient duration to gather enough data to reach statistical significance. The required duration will depend on factors like your website traffic, the baseline conversion rate, and the magnitude of the difference between your variations.

Once the experiment has run for an adequate period, you can analyze the results to determine which variation (if any) performed significantly better. Optimizely provides statistical analysis tools to help you understand the likelihood that the observed differences are due to the changes you made rather than random chance.

The final step is to take action based on the results of your experiment. If a variation shows a statistically significant improvement in your primary metric, you would typically implement that change on your website for all users. If no variation performs significantly better than the original, you have learned that this particular change did not have the desired impact, and you can use these learnings to inform future experiments.

Creating an experiment in Optimizely Web Experimentation is a multi-faceted process that requires careful attention to detail across several key areas. By thoughtfully configuring Pages, Variations, Events, Metrics, and Audiences, and by conducting thorough QA, you can ensure that your experiments are well-designed, accurately tracked, and provide valuable insights for optimizing your website and achieving your business goals. Remember that experimentation is an iterative process, and the learnings from each test will help you refine your hypotheses and drive continuous improvement.



CHAPTER 3: OPTIMIZEZY WEB EXPERIMENTATION: INTERPRETING YOUR RESULTS

In Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, we have seen that several critical phases are required to ensure the optimization of digital experiences through Optimizely Web Experimentation. The process starts with strategic planning and hypothesis development, moves through the careful construction and launch of experiments, and culminates in analysis and iteration. In this chapter, we'll focus on interpreting results within Optimizely, understanding its statistical foundations, handling various outcomes (winning, losing, or inconclusive), and fostering a culture of continuous improvement through long-term iteration.

THE OPTIMIZEZY STATS ENGINE

At the core of Optimizely's analytical capabilities is its sophisticated Stats Engine. This engine is designed specifically to calculate experiment results accurately and determine statistical significance efficiently. It moves beyond traditional A/B testing methods, which often rely on fixed horizon calculations requiring a predetermined sample size before analysis can even begin.

Instead, Optimizely primarily employs a sequential testing approach. It analyzes the data cumulatively, repeatedly checking if a statistically significant difference has emerged between variations. The primary benefit of this approach is speed and efficiency; experiments can often be concluded the moment significance is reached, rather than forcing teams to wait unnecessarily for an arbitrary sample size target, allowing for faster learning cycles and quicker implementation of winning variations.

Furthermore, the Stats Engine incorporates methods to control the False Discovery Rate (FDR). This is particularly critical when an experiment includes multiple goals or metrics being tracked simultaneously. Evaluating multiple metrics increases the inherent risk of encountering false positives (detecting a significant effect where none actually exists simply due to chance). FDR control intelligently manages this risk across all tracked metrics, ensuring greater confidence in the overall findings and preventing teams from acting on misleading signals. The robust combination of sequential testing and FDR control provides a foundation for trustworthy results delivered efficiently.

UNDERSTANDING STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Statistical significance essentially quantifies the probability that an observed difference between your experiment's variations (like a change in conversion rate) is a genuine effect resulting from the changes you made, rather than being a product of random chance or normal fluctuations in user behavior.

Optimizely expresses this concept through a confidence level, defaulting to the industry standard of 95%. When a result reaches statistical significance at a 95% confidence level, it implies there is only a 5% probability that the observed difference occurred purely due to random variation. Conversely, it suggests a 95% probability that the difference represents a real effect caused by the variation.

It is vital to recognize what statistical significance does and does not indicate:

- It measures the likelihood that the observed effect is real, not just random noise.
- It does not measure the magnitude or business importance of the effect; a statistically significant result could be very small.
- It is crucial for avoiding false positives – acting on results that aren't actually real.
- It is typically expressed via a confidence level (e.g., 90%, 95%), which is the inverse of the p-value threshold.

Relying on statistical significance ensures that decisions are based on reliable evidence, preventing organizations from chasing random fluctuations or implementing changes based solely on observation or intuition.

INTERPRETING CONFIDENCE INTERVALS

While statistical significance answers the question “Is there likely a real difference?”, confidence intervals address the equally important question: “How big is that difference likely to be?”. A confidence interval provides a calculated range within which the true effect size (the actual uplift or downlift caused by the variation) likely lies, based on the observed data.

For instance, a winning result might display a 95% confidence interval of [+2%, +8%] for the conversion rate lift. This means we can be 95% confident that the true improvement generated by the variation, compared to the original, falls somewhere between a 2% lift and an 8% lift. This range offers valuable context for decision-making.



Key aspects of interpreting confidence intervals include:

- **Provides a likely range:** It estimates the boundaries for the true uplift or downlift.
- **Direct link to significance:** If the confidence interval for the difference between a variation and the baseline does not include zero (e.g., [+2%, +8%] or [-5%, -1%]), the result is statistically significant at that confidence level. If it does include zero (e.g., [-1%, +5%]), the result is inconclusive because a zero or negative effect is statistically plausible.
- **Indicates precision:** Narrower intervals (e.g., [+4%, +5%]) suggest higher precision and more certainty about the effect size, often resulting from larger sample sizes or lower data variability. Wider intervals (e.g., [+1%, +15%]) indicate less precision.
- **Assesses business impact:** The range helps gauge whether the potential impact, even at the low end of the interval, is meaningful enough to warrant implementation.

Understanding confidence intervals allows teams to move beyond a simple “significant/not significant” verdict and evaluate the potential business value and certainty associated with an observed effect.

WINNING, LOSING, AND INCONCLUSIVE RESULTS

Based on the calculations performed by the Stats Engine, considering both statistical significance and confidence intervals for the experiment's primary metric, Optimizely categorizes results into one of three types:

- **Winning Result:** A variation demonstrates a statistically significant positive impact on the primary metric compared to the baseline or other variations. Its confidence interval for the difference will be entirely above zero. This indicates high confidence that the changes genuinely improved performance for the main goal.

- **Losing Result:** A variation shows a statistically significant negative impact on the primary metric. Its confidence interval for the difference will be entirely below zero. This reliably suggests the changes were detrimental to the key performance indicator.
- **Inconclusive Result:** The Stats Engine could not detect a statistically significant difference (either positive or negative) for the primary metric at the chosen confidence level. The confidence interval includes zero. This doesn't definitively mean there's no difference, but rather that the collected data doesn't provide enough evidence to confidently distinguish a real effect from random noise. This can occur due to a very small actual effect size, high variability in user behavior, or insufficient sample size.

ITERATE INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

The real work often begins after the Stats Engine renders its verdict. The Iterate phase is about translating these results – whether winning, losing, or inconclusive – into actionable next steps and feeding those learnings back into the optimization cycle. How an organization handles each type of result is critical for maximizing the value of their experimentation program.

WINNING RESULTS

When faced with a Winning Result, the initial reaction is often celebration, followed by implementation. However, careful consideration is still required. Before rolling out the change site-wide, it's wise to examine secondary metrics. Did the win on the primary metric come at the cost of another important indicator? For example, did simplifying a form increase submissions (primary win) but decrease the quality or value of those submissions (secondary loss)? Segmentation is also key. Did the variation win across all major audience segments (e.g., new vs. returning, mobile vs. desktop), or was the lift driven by a specific group? Understanding these nuances ensures the implementation is truly beneficial overall. Once verified, the winning variation should be prioritized for development and deployment. Importantly, a win shouldn't necessarily be the end of the line for that area of the user experience. It provides a new, improved baseline upon which further hypotheses can be built. Could the winning design be refined further? Could adjacent elements now be optimized to complement the successful change? A win is both a conclusion and a starting point for the next iteration.

LOSING RESULTS

Losing Results can be just as valuable, if not sometimes more valuable, than wins. A statistically significant loss provides clear, reliable feedback that a particular hypothesis was incorrect or that the implemented change harmed the user experience or conversion goals. The primary action is typically to not implement the change and ensure the losing variation is archived. However, the crucial step is to analyze why it lost. Did the change introduce usability issues? Did it conflict with established user mental models or expectations? Did it negatively impact clarity or trust? Digging into session recordings, heatmaps, or conducting qualitative user feedback related to the losing variation can uncover deep insights into user behavior and preferences. These learnings are invaluable for refining future hypotheses. Documenting why something didn't work prevents teams from repeating mistakes and helps build a stronger understanding of the user base. Embracing losses as learning opportunities is a hallmark of a mature experimentation culture; failing fast and learning efficiently is a strategic advantage.

INCONCLUSIVE RESULTS

Inconclusive Results often require the most critical thinking and strategic decision-making. An inconclusive outcome doesn't mean the experiment was a waste; it simply means the data didn't provide a clear direction with sufficient confidence. There are several ways to proceed. One option is to let the experiment run longer, gathering more data. If the results are hovering near the significance threshold and the potential impact is high, acquiring a larger sample size might increase the precision and potentially push the result into winning or losing territory. However, this must be balanced against the opportunity cost of occupying testing slots and delaying other experiments. Another powerful approach is segmentation. Even if the overall result is inconclusive, specific audience segments (defined by device, traffic source, behavior, etc.) might show a significant win or loss. Analyzing these segments can uncover pockets of opportunity or reveal that a change benefits one group while slightly harming another, leading to personalization strategies rather than a site-wide change. Alternatively, an inconclusive result might prompt a re-evaluation of the hypothesis or execution. Was the change too subtle to realistically produce a detectable effect? Was the hypothesis fundamentally flawed? Were there technical glitches (like slow loading of the variation) that might have muddied the data? If the potential impact was deemed low initially, or if

other tests hold higher promise, the team might decide to archive the experiment and move on, documenting the outcome and any tentative observations. Handling inconclusive results effectively involves assessing the potential value, the quality of the data and hypothesis, and the strategic priorities of the optimization program.

OPTIMIZING FOR THE LONG TERM

The true potential of Optimizely Web Experimentation unfolds when it fuels a continuous, long-term process of iteration and learning, rather than just executing sporadic, disconnected tests.

- **Establish a Knowledge Repository:** This is fundamental for cumulative learning. Every experiment, regardless of outcome, generates valuable data points and insights. Maintain a centralized location (like a wiki, spreadsheet, or dedicated platform) to document:
 - The original hypothesis and its rationale.
 - Detailed descriptions or screenshots of the variations tested.
 - Key metrics, final results (including significance and confidence intervals), and segment performance.
 - Learnings derived – the interpretation of why the result occurred.
 - Decisions made (e.g., implemented, archived, follow-up test planned). This repository prevents redundant efforts, informs future hypotheses with past data, accelerates onboarding, and demonstrates the program's impact.
- **Build on Previous Learnings:** Use the knowledge repository to ensure that future tests are informed by past results. Wins create new baselines. Losses define boundaries and highlight user sensitivities. Inconclusive results point towards areas needing different approaches or deeper investigation. Each experiment should ideally build upon the collective understanding gained from prior tests.
- **Expand Scope and Complexity:** As the team and program mature, move beyond simple A/B tests. Explore multivariate testing (MVT) to understand the interaction effects of multiple changes simultaneously. Test more significant changes in user flows, information architecture, or core features. Integrate Optimizely with other data sources (Analytics, CRM, CDP) for more sophisticated targeting and measurement, leading towards advanced personalization strategies.

- **Foster Cross-functional Collaboration:** Optimization is a team sport. Ensure continuous input from various departments – marketing, product management, UX/UI design, development, analytics, customer support. Each function brings unique perspectives and data points that can inspire powerful hypotheses and help interpret results more holistically.
- **Maintain a Strategic Roadmap:** Regularly review and prioritize the experimentation backlog based on potential impact, confidence, ease, and alignment with current business objectives. An experimentation roadmap provides direction and ensures resources are focused on the most promising opportunities.

Embedding this iterative mindset into the organizational culture transforms experimentation from a tactic into a strategic capability for driving continuous improvement.

DRIVING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Analyze and Iterate phases are the heartbeat of a successful Optimizely Web Experimentation program. They bridge the gap between running tests and achieving real-world improvements. Through rigorous analysis grounded in a solid understanding of Optimizely's Stats Engine, statistical significance, and confidence intervals, teams can confidently interpret whether a change resulted in a win, a loss, or an inconclusive outcome. More importantly, by thoughtfully handling each result type – implementing and iterating on wins, learning deeply from losses, and strategically navigating inconclusive findings – organizations can unlock immense value. By committing to this cycle and fostering a culture of long-term, data-driven iteration supported by a robust knowledge base and cross-functional collaboration, businesses can leverage experimentation to deliver consistently better user experiences and achieve sustained growth in their digital endeavors.



CHAPTER 4: WHAT IS OPTIMIZEZY PERSONALIZATION?

In the first few chapters, we focused on Web Experimentation and its implementation, optimization, and interpretation. In this chapter, we will shift into Personalization.

Straight from Optimizely's digital pen, "Personalization is the process of delivering a unique digital experience for each individual user by leveraging customer data and real-time behavior analysis." It involves examining your customer behavior and interactions with your digital platforms and using that information to create made-to-order experiences that more fully engage the customer. Some examples could be highlighting or displaying complimentary products based on your customer's previous purchase history or bubbling up content recommendations on your website or mobile app based on previous content they have viewed.

Optimizely Personalization is a feature within the Optimizely Digital Experience Platform that allows you to tailor your user experiences based on individual preferences, behaviors, and demographics. The process of personalization involves delivering relevant website content, product recommendations, user journeys, and other elements to enhance engagement, conversion rates, and customer satisfaction. Successfully utilizing Optimizely Personalization allows businesses to easily create and manage a cohesive omnichannel strategy across all devices, social media, and other touchpoints.

Optimizely Personalization can be used as stand-alone or in conjunction with Optimizely Web Experimentation to test your website design and content elements and tailor experiences to specific audiences simultaneously. For example,

you could run an A/B test of your personalized experiences with customers using Optimizely Web Experimentation, create two versions of an experience in a campaign using Optimizely Personalization, and compare how well they perform.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

With the addition of just one line of javascript code that Optimizely provides, marketers can be on their way toward providing highly personalized experiences for their customers. You'll likely need a little support from your web team to install this javascript snippet in the <head> tag of every page that should run experiments or be tracked as a goal, but Optimizely Personalization is designed to be marketer-ready – meaning, you don't have to know how to write complex code to make the magic happen.

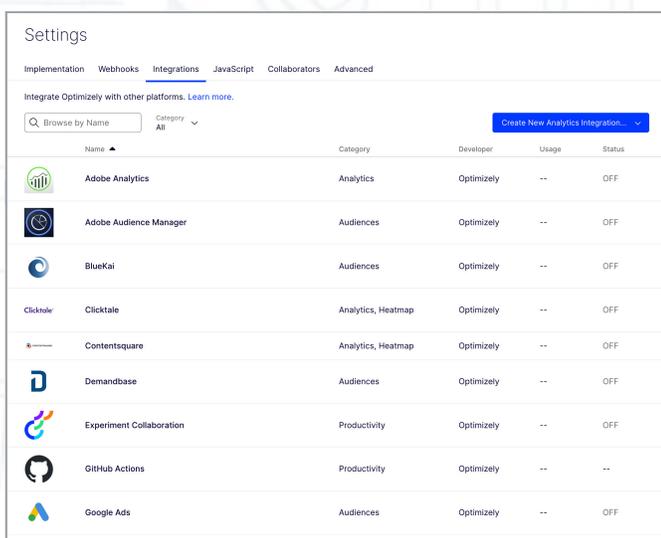
Once integrated and configured, your website's key pages, events, and tags begin providing data on your visitors' behavior. You can use these behaviors with data from other resources to create audiences. Audiences allow you to deliver personalized experiences across all relevant webpages and create campaigns for different audiences on each page. For example, you may have a user who has recently purchased a hat. When she returns to your website, you could display images of scarves and gloves to her. Another user has recently purchased galoshes. When he returns to your site, you could present umbrellas and rain jackets as the primary images on the main web page. And you can do this all in real time, with data you're collecting through the Optimizely Data Platform or your own third-party tool, without the involvement of your web or IT teams!

After you run a Personalization Campaign, you will want to measure its effectiveness. The results page for Optimizely Personalization measures the lift of your primary metric and other events you track over the life of your campaign. You can view these results by campaign or audience. Using those results, you can then decide how to refine your marketing strategies and tactics for maximum success. The bottom line – Instead of targeting an activity to a large group of users that you think have common characteristics, personalization allows you to cater to what is known about each specific individual user and use it to surface relevant content to web and app visitors to increase their engagement and reduce page abandonment.

HOW DOES IT REALLY WORK?

Let's take a walk through a sample Personalization Campaign use case. For this campaign, we have been tasked by our CMO to reduce drop off on several key products pages of the website. Web analytics has shown us that we have an identifiable group of visitors who visit multiple product pages and then return to the home page without purchasing during their web session, and we want to incent them to complete the purchase process.

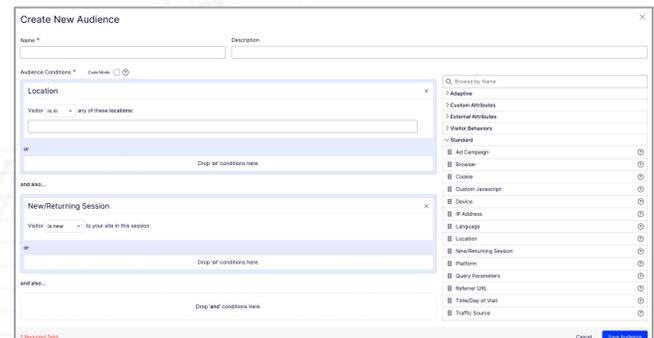
First, we start with the data. Optimizely collects data from various sources – user behavior on your website, historical purchases, user profiles, attributes integrated from your data warehouse, Optimizely's Data Platform, and various web analytics providers. All of this data is used to help the platform understand your users' preferences. Your platform administrator likely will have set up all of your desired integrations, but if there are other systems or data points you require, the Optimizely Web Experimentation Platform is designed to be easy to integrate with a number of tools, including many out of the box connections.



The screenshot shows the 'Settings' page with the 'Integrations' tab selected. It features a search bar and a 'Create New Analytics Integration...' button. Below is a table of integrations:

Name	Category	Developer	Usage	Status
Adobe Analytics	Analytics	Optimizely	--	OFF
Adobe Audience Manager	Audiences	Optimizely	--	OFF
BlueKai	Audiences	Optimizely	--	OFF
Clicktale	Analytics, Heatmap	Optimizely	--	OFF
Contentsquare	Analytics, Heatmap	Optimizely	--	OFF
Demandbase	Audiences	Optimizely	--	OFF
Experiment Collaboration	Productivity	Optimizely	--	OFF
GitHub Actions	Productivity	Optimizely	--	--
Google Ads	Audiences	Optimizely	--	OFF

Once we have all of our integrations enabled, we turn our focus to our audience creation. Optimizely Personalization enables marketers to segment audiences easily based on attributes like demographics, geographic location, browsing history, and past purchase behaviors, and all with a drag and drop interface.



Next, marketers can set up the rules and conditions for their campaign that decide how and when personalized content is shown to different segments. For example, a returning visitor might see product recommendations based on their previous purchases, while a new visitor might receive introductory offers. In our campaign scenario, for those users who meet the audience criteria, their next visit to our website will highlight the product they were last viewing on the main webpage along with a discount coupon code. All other site visitors will be exposed to their own standard or customized website experience, based on their user attributes.

In this way, Optimizely Personalization can subtly let your customers and prospects know that you know who they are, what their interests are, and underscore your desire to connect with them individually as they experience your buying journey. The platform can adapt in real-time to user interaction and ensure that the user experience develops organically as your user navigates your website or app. This dynamic approach both enhances relevancy and expands engagement.

WHAT DOES IT MATTER?

Quite honestly, personalization matters most of all in today's marketing landscape simply because customers expect it. They do not want a generic experience, especially if they've spent time on your digital properties dropping hints (aka, attributes and logged events) about what they are most interested in hearing from you. But that is just the tip of the iceberg. Personalization is key to a company's marketing success because it:

- **Enhances the User Experience** – User experiences can be vastly improved by delivering relevant content and recommendations, minimizing irrelevant information, and streamlining navigation. By focusing on your customers and providing them an experience that caters to their individual preferences, you can foster a sense of connection and loyalty among your customers.
- **Produces Higher Conversion Rates** – Personalized experiences have a proven track record of driving higher conversion rates. Research from McKinsey shows that personalization can drive a 10 to 15 percent revenue lift at a minimum, and companies who do it well experience up to 25% lift. When customers are presented with content and offers that are tailored to their specific needs and interests, they are more likely to take action, and that's good for your bottom line. Personalization also accelerates the time it takes for customers to complete the sales funnel, ultimately leading to increased revenue and growth.
- **Increases Customer Loyalty** – When customers feel valued, they are more inclined to develop a strong sense of loyalty towards a brand. Personalization nurtures that bond designed to enhance customer retention and advocacy. By consistently delivering personalized experiences, you can grow a loyal customer base that more readily makes repeat purchases and recommends your products or services to others.
- **Gives You the Competitive Advantage** – Let's face it, to rise above the pack, you have to be the most relevant to your customers. Personalization has become a key differentiator. You don't want to be left behind as your competitors embrace and actively leverage personalization strategies to enhance their customers' experience and drive greater results. By investing in personalization, you can gain a competitive edge and be better positioned for long-term success.

- **Provides Data-Driven Decision Making** – Optimizely provides a suite of analytics tools that help to measure the impact of your personalization efforts. They can aid in refining your marketing strategies and create more informed marketing campaigns based on user data that you have collected across all of your digital properties. These insights can help to pinpoint what's working and what's not and provide a way to continuously optimize your personalization strategies for maximum success.

THE BOTTOM LINE

In today's marketing landscape, it is adapt or die. Optimizely Personalization is a vital tool in your marketing toolkit that allows you to take advantage of all the data you collect from your audience to generate advanced, hyper-personalized experiences. Creating these tailored experiences boost engagement and conversion and foster long-lasting customer relationships. In an increasingly competitive and digital-first world, personalization becomes more than simply a choice; it is a necessity for businesses to prosper and succeed.





CHAPTER 5: LEVERAGING OPTIMIZEZY DATA PLATFORM FOR TAILORED CUSTOMER JOURNEYS

As we dive into Chapter 5, we will explore Optimizely Data Platform, the engine that helps to fuel optimized experiments and data-driven personalization.

Open any industry article today and you'll read about the importance of personalization. We all know it's important because our customers expect it. In fact, 89% of marketing decision-makers consider personalization essential for their business's success over the next three years. On the flip side, over two-thirds (63%) of digital marketing executives struggle with providing tailored customer experiences. How do we actually "do" it effectively? That's where things get interesting. Juggling data silos, different marketing channels, and creating experiences that truly resonate with individuals can feel quite formidable.

That's where Optimizely Data Platform (ODP) comes into play. Think of it as your central hub for understanding your customers and delivering personalized experiences they crave, across all the places they interact with your brand. In this post, we'll break down how you can actually use the Optimizely Data Platform to make personalization a reality, not just a buzzword. We'll cover everything from the core features to practical examples, so you can start seeing results.

WHAT EXACTLY IS ODP?

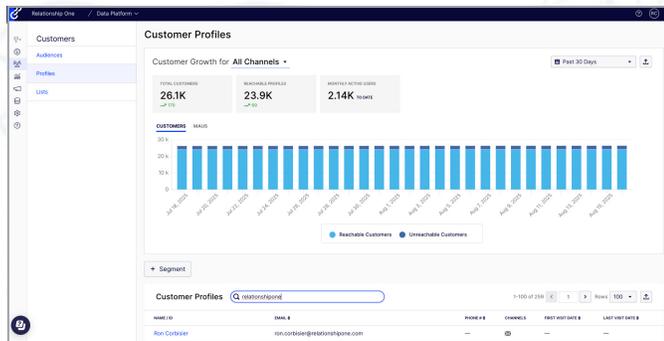
Before we dive into the "how," we want to make sure we're clear about what Optimizely ODP actually "is". In simple terms, it's a customer data platform (CDP) built to help marketers:

- **Centralize Customer Data** – ODP allows you to bring together data from all your different sources including website behavior, email interactions, purchase history, CRM data, and more into a single, unified view of each customer.
- **Understand Your Audience** – It facilitates audience segmentation based on a wide range of attributes and behaviors, allowing you to identify specific groups with shared interests and needs.
- **Orchestrate Personalized Experiences** – You can then use those insights to create and deliver personalized messages and experiences across different channels, such as email, website, ads, and even in-app interactions.
- **Measure and Optimize** – Finally, you can track the performance of your personalization efforts and continuously refine your strategies to improve results.

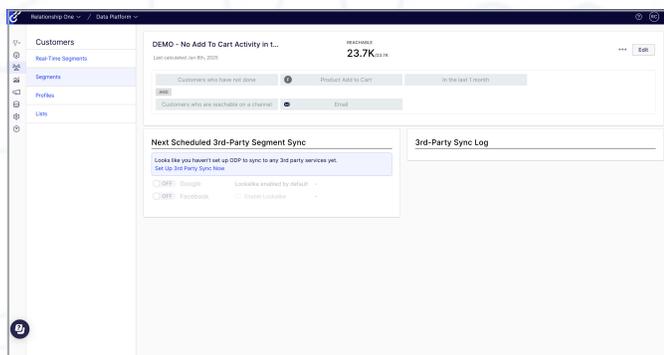
Think of ODP as the brain that powers your personalized marketing efforts. It's not just about collecting data; it's about turning that data into actionable insights and using those insights to create better experiences for your customers.

KEY FEATURES THAT MAKE PERSONALIZATION POSSIBLE

The Optimizely Data Platform has more features than the space of this post will allow, but one of the most important ones for marketers focused on personalization is the ability to create Unified Customer Profiles. ODP creates a single, comprehensive profile for each customer by stitching together data from all your different sources. That means no more fragmented views or manually cobbling together data from multiple sources! You can see everything a customer has done, from their first website visit to their most recent purchase.



From the unified customer profile, ODP allows you to segment your audience. Segmentation features allow you to group your customers based on shared characteristics such as demographics, behavior, purchase history, interests, and pretty much anything else you dream up. The more granular your segments, the more personalized your messaging can be.

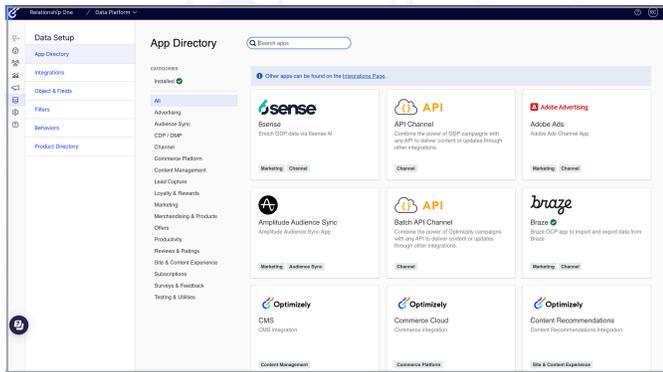


ODP also captures data in real-time, so you can react to customer behavior as it happens. This is crucial for delivering timely and relevant experiences. Imagine a customer abandoning a shopping cart. Within minutes, you can trigger an automated email with a special offer to encourage that customer to return and complete their purchase.

SEGMENT NAME	STATUS	CREATOR	CREATED	LAST UPDATED
Demonstrated Intent to Purchase	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Engaged by Email	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Has a Phone Number	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Has a Phone Number but it is Unreachable	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Has a Phone Number Opted-In	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Has a Phone Number Opted-Out	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Has an Email Address Opted-In	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Has an Email Address Opted-Out	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Has an Email but it is not Reachable	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Has Either an Email or Phone Number Opted-In	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Has Email Address	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Have Engaged with Marketing	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Users Referred by a Facebook Ad	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Users Referred by a Google Ad	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Users Referred by a Twitter Ad	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	
Users that have Considered 10 or more Products	Ready to use	Optimizely	10/8/2024, 2:17:49 PM	

All this magic happens in the Personalization Engine. ODP's back-end workflows and capabilities allow you to create and deliver personalized content and experiences based on customer segments and individual behavior. You can personalize website content, email messages, ad campaigns, and more. And as we all know, personalization isn't a "set it and forget it" thing. You need to continuously test and optimize your strategies to improve results. ODP makes it easy to A/B test different personalization approaches and track their performance.

Lastly, ODP integrates with a wide range of marketing tools, including email marketing platforms, CRM systems, advertising platforms, and more. This allows you to seamlessly incorporate personalization into your existing marketing workflows. Using ODP, marketers can design and automate personalized customer journeys across multiple touchpoints, guiding them through tailored experiences based on their behavior and preferences.



HOW MARKETERS CAN USE OPTIMIZELY ODP: PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

We've talked about ODP theoretically up to this point. But how do you use ODP to create personalized marketing experiences in the "real world?" One common scenario is that you have a visitor who lands on your website for the first time. ODP can track their referral source (e.g., Google, social media) and personalize the homepage content in real time to match their interests. For example, if they came from a Google search for "trendy purses," you could highlight your purses and accessories collection as the hero image on your main page.

For another website scenario, let's say you have a returning customer who has previously purchased hiking gear. ODP recognizes them and displays content related to hiking, such as new hiking trails, gear recommendations, or upcoming hiking events.

ODP can also help with channels such as email and social ads. A typical marketing scenario is that you have a customer who has been inactive for a while. ODP can bubble up this customer so that you can send a re-engagement email with personalized product recommendations based on their past purchases and browsing history. Additionally, ODP can help streamline and personalize your advertising efforts. If you want to target a group of customers who may be interested in a specific product you offer, ODP can create a custom audience based on their engagement behavior with your website and their purchase history. From there, you can target this custom audience with ads on platforms like Google and Facebook. Conversely, if you want to suppress ads to customers who have already purchased a product, ODP can exclude those customers from the ad campaign so that you aren't wasting precious ad spend on those customers who have already converted.

If you have a mobile app, ODP can help you personalize in-app experiences. For new users to your mobile App, ODP can trigger a personalized onboarding journey that guides the new user through key features and benefits. This can ensure user "stickiness" to keep them coming back to the app. ODP can also provide contextual help and support when it recognizes that the user's in-app behavior indicates a struggle with a certain feature.

There are so many personalization scenarios where ODP can help. Those listed above are just a few to help you get the creative juices flowing. From post-purchase emails and rewarding customers with loyalty programs to custom tailoring content to match a reader's interest, ODP has the data and the power to create uniquely personalized paths for every one of your customers and prospects. Additionally, ODP can be integrated into your other customer touchpoint technologies to deliver a unified view of each customer's interactions, purchases, and preferences. Just think of the possibilities!

GETTING STARTED WITH OPTIMIZELY ODP: A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH

If you are sold on the idea of personalization, what's next? Here's a suggested approach to getting started with the Optimizely Data Platform:

- Define Your Goals:** Take the time to determine what you want to achieve with personalization. Be very specific — Do you want to increase conversion rates? Improve customer retention? Drive more revenue? Having clearly defined goals will help you focus your efforts and measure your success.
- Identify Your Data Sources:** Map out where your customer data is currently stored and identify all the systems that contain relevant data. Those systems should include your website, email marketing platform, CRM, and e-commerce platform, at a minimum.
- Plan Your Integrations:** Planning up front will save you headaches down the road. Take the time to determine how you will connect your data sources to ODP and work with your IT team to plan the necessary integrations. ODP has pre-built integrations with many popular marketing tools, but you may need to develop custom integrations for some systems.

- **Define Your Segments:** Start by identifying your key customer segments. These can be broad segments based on demographics, behavior, or purchase history. As you learn more and gather more data with ODP, you can refine your segments for even greater personalization.
- **Create Your First Personalization Campaigns:** Focus in on a few key use cases that will provide your biggest return on investment. Maybe it's personalization of the homepage of your website, or setting up a series of abandoned cart emails. Get the quick wins and then expand from there.
- **Test and Optimize:** Make sure you have a method in place to track the performance of your personalization campaigns regularly so that you can make adjustments as needed. Your new best friend is going to be the A/B testing so you can understand what leads to better engagement and conversion rates.
- **Scale Your Efforts:** Once you are seeing regular success with your initial campaigns, start expanding your personalization efforts to other channels and use cases. The sky's the limit!
- **Continuously Learn:** Personalization is not a once and done process. With every test and iteration, you learn something new that you can apply the next time. Additionally, keep abreast of industry trends and best practices. They evolve quickly as well.
- **Data Quality is Key:** Nothing erodes trust quicker than proving to your customer that you don't know who they are by sending them information they aren't interested in receiving. Ensure your data is accurate and up-to-date.
- **Collaboration is Crucial:** Personalization requires collaboration between marketing, sales, and IT. Make sure everyone is on the same page and aligned toward the same vision.

THE FUTURE OF PERSONALIZATION

Today, customers already expect personalized experiences with your brand, and it is only going to become more important in the future. According to DemandSage, 71% of consumers prefer personalized shopping experiences, and 76% of consumers prefer to buy from brands that personalize their user experiences. With these growing expectations, customers are demanding more relevant interactions, and companies that can deliver those experiences will have a significant competitive advantage.

ODP is just the tool to help you meet your customer demands and create truly personalized marketing experiences that drive results. ODP offers a robust platform for marketers to centralize customer data, understand their audience, and orchestrate personalized experiences across various channels. By leveraging its key features combined with a strategic approach, marketers can unlock the full potential of personalization, improve customer engagement, increase conversion rates, and enhance brand loyalty.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

There are a few tips when working with a platform like Optimizely Data Platform. Because there is so much power, so much data, and so many choices, it's easy to get overwhelmed and try to do everything at once. Our advice to you is to:

- **Start Small:** You will drive yourself crazy if you try to personalize everything at once. And, you won't know what is actually working. Focus on a few key areas where you can make the biggest impact.
- **Focus on Value:** Personalizing just because you can won't provide you the results you desire. Make sure your personalization efforts are actually providing value to your customers.
- **Be Sure to Respect Privacy:** Give your customers the control over their privacy preferences. If they say 'no, thank you,' respect it. It is important to be completely transparent about how you're using customer data to maintain trust in your business reputation.

WRAPPING THINGS UP



A MARKETING GEEK'S GUIDE: OPTIMIZE EXPERIMENTATION AND PERSONALIZATION

You've now seen how experimentation and personalization can transform your marketing approach. By moving away from guesswork and leaning into data-driven insights, you gain the ability to understand what truly resonates with your audience. Whether it's refining messaging, testing design variations, or tailoring customer journeys, these practices help you create experiences that are not just relevant — but impactful. With the right strategy, the right tools, and a willingness to test, you can drive measurable results and build more confident marketing decisions.

The future of marketing belongs to the curious — and you're already one step ahead. The more you experiment, the more you learn. The more you personalize, the stronger your connections become. Consider this guide your launchpad for ongoing innovation. Keep asking questions, keep testing boldly, and keep pushing your marketing to new heights.

