

ORACLE

Making Sense of Unified Customer Profiles



Spark Series



A SEVEN-MINUTE READ



What is a unified customer profile?

Aggregate, real-time data across all customer touchpoints combine to deliver optimal personalized customer experiences. Web, social media, mobile—customer channels are exploding. But, despite providing so many opportunities to engage with customers, this increase in volume actually makes it harder to deliver personalized, cross-channel experiences. According to Gartner, by the end of 2022, 50% of large organizations will have failed to unify these engagement channels, resulting in a disjointed customer experience.¹

The challenge for businesses is to take the high volume of customer data from multiple channels and create a comprehensive customer snapshot. That's where a unified customer profile (UCP) compiles relevant data from disparate sources to create a single 360-degree customer view. Those sources include:

- **Online and offline channels**
- **First, second, and third-party data**





- **Relevant data** from marketing, sales, finance, service, and field service applications

When designed and executed correctly, a UCP provides valuable insights into your customers' unique needs so you can tailor solutions to nurture existing customer relationships, improve brand loyalty and bring complex products and selling processes online to help improve the bottom line.



Why it matters today

Every click, swipe, and online purchase provides valuable information about your customer.

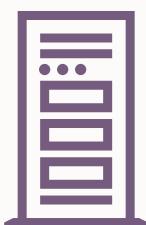
They're continually connected, have high expectations and expect personalized experiences. In fact, 90% of U.S. consumers find marketing personalization very or somewhat appealing.² Having a UCP in place improves the customer experience and drives revenue but building a unified customer profile has its own set of challenges. Here are a few.



Legacy systems: Many businesses continue to work with legacy systems that no longer deliver what's needed for a great customer experience. As the business grows, other solutions—marketing automation, customer relationship management (CRM), customer service, etc.—may be added. Unfortunately, too often, they are not connected in a way that allows information to be shared, and the challenges get more difficult.



More than half of organizations have a minimum of 11 systems of siloed data, which inhibits them from delivering exceptional customer experiences consistently. They're unable to meet customers' real-time expectations because they don't have the agility to better understand customers and deliver better outcomes.³



Data quality: Consistent, reliable data quality continues to be an issue for organizations because of disconnected systems across different lines of business, incomplete or outdated sales data, and improperly reconciled second- and third-party data, and more. In today's connected world, what you knew about a customer a month, a week or even a day ago may not be an accurate reflection of them today—right now.



Data silos: Each line of business (for example, sales, marketing, customer service) within an organization is collecting the customer data that's relevant to them. Too often, these systems are hard to integrate, so the easiest thing to do is keep that data in those lines of business.





Changing nature of customer data:

New regulations and laws around data and how it can be used will impact how you plan to build a UCP. How will you ensure only the right teams have access to specific information? How regularly will you update the data? Can you share a negative customer interaction with other teams, or is that a violation of privacy terms? These are important factors to consider when developing a unified customer profile.



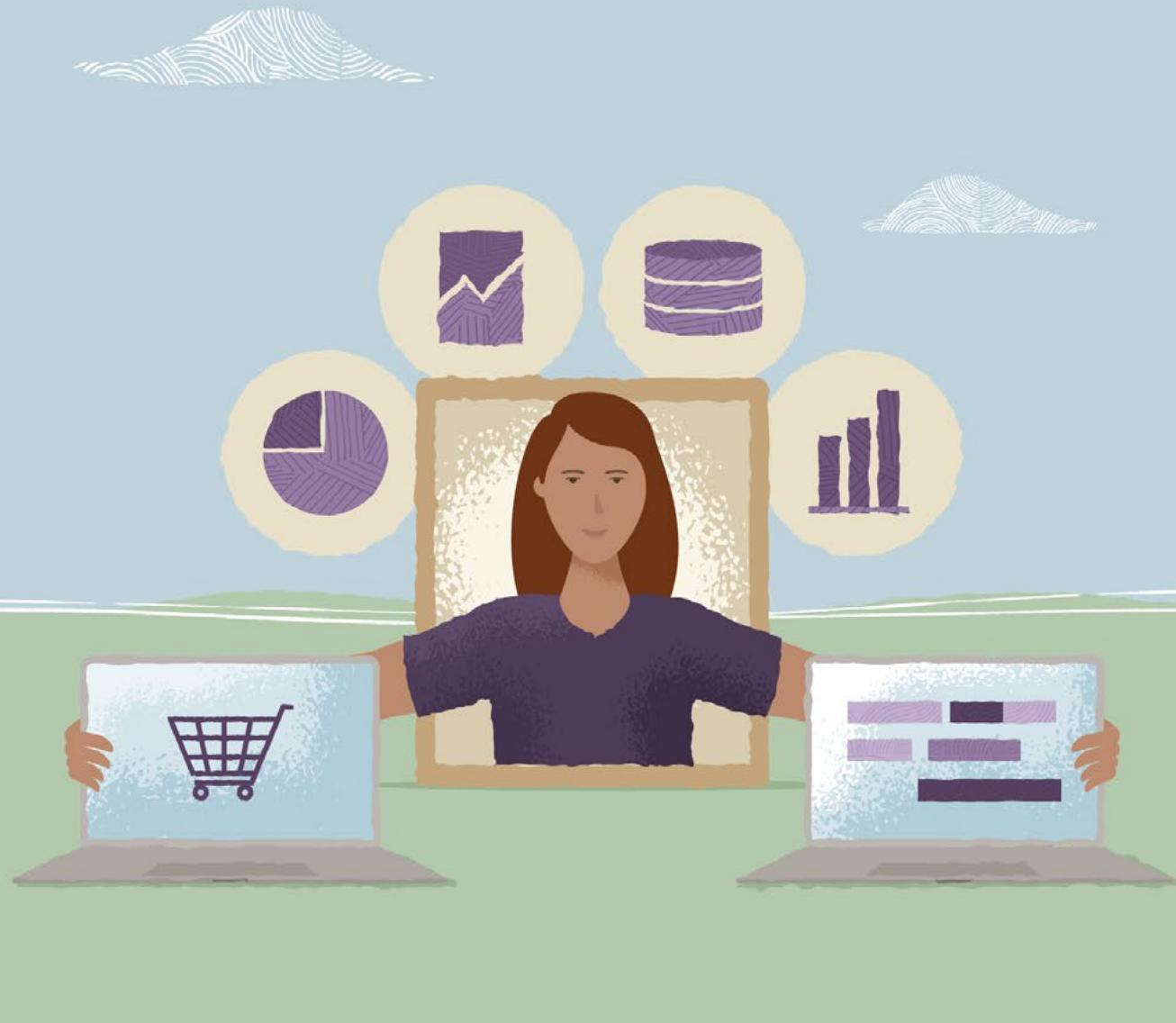
Changing nature of buyers: Don't forget the people behind the data. In business-to-business buying, if someone leaves their current job and moves to another company, you may have that individual in your system twice. Or, consider buying committees. Do you have the capability to group individuals or link them so your sellers can have a better understanding of the committee?

Once you understand the challenges and work through them, deploying a unified customer profile benefits the business and customers alike.

For businesses, a UCP:

- **Provides a better understanding** of the customers' interests, buying history and service preferences





- **Enables you to run more effective sales and marketing campaigns**, sales programs, and post-sales support, which ultimately helps the bottom line
- **Ensures your entire team is working from a single source** of truth about your customer.

Customers benefit from a UCP by:

- **Getting sales and marketing communications** that are tailored to their specific interests
- **Receiving relevant, proactive offers** and support from service and field service teams.

When you better understand your customers' wants and needs, you can deliver better customer experiences. A happy customer is more likely to be a repeat customer that spends more and advocates for your business too.



The basics

Golden customer record—the holy grail of customer data.

It's a single view of the customer that everyone in the organization works from. Every business wants one. Many struggle to achieve it.

A golden customer record is when data from enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, CRM systems, marketing automation platforms, and other customer experience applications are consolidated, corrected, and coordinated in a single profile the business can trust.

Once a unified customer profile, is established, a variety of business activities across all lines of business can perform better, including:

- **Analytics and campaign measurement and management**
- **Advertising and awareness campaigns**
- **Demand generation programs**
- **Personalizing content and messaging**
- **Email marketing and customer marketing**





- **Account-based marketing (ABM) programs**
- **Lead management and routing**
- **Sales prioritization**
- **Customer service**
- **Upselling from service and field service teams**



What's next?

AI is now a driving force behind building powerful unified customer profiles.

Artificial intelligence (AI), which includes machine learning, chatbots, big data and analytics, uses data and customer profiles to learn the most effective way to communicate with customers. It can then send tailored messages at the ideal time without human intervention. For many businesses, AI is an effective way to augment marketing teams and perform routine tasks.

Unlike traditional data analytics software, AI helps businesses go beyond standard demographic data to learn about consumer preferences on a granular level. AI can anticipate customer behavior because it continuously learns and improves based on the data it analyzes and finds patterns that a human may overlook. This allows businesses to provide highly relevant content, increase sales opportunities, and improve the customer journey.

Businesses can improve the customer journey across all touchpoints and channels by leveraging AI to better understand the customer, take advantage of real-time decisioning and predictive analysis, and provide a hyper-personalized experience.



A view toward practical solutions

Build customer loyalty, trust, and long-term value.

When executed correctly, a unified customer profile ensures success across every customer experience and creates customers who will come back to you time and again. Here's how.

Create seamless brand experiences

Leverage what you've learned to create the ideal brand experience for every individual across the entire customer journey.

Integrate customer experience applications

Connect data across sales, service, marketing, and commerce applications for the most accurate customer view.

Push-button publishing and personalization

Allow teams to publish customer segments in real time to create a more personalized customer experience.





Gain real-time 360-degree customer view

Get a 360-degree view of the customer across marketing, sales, service, and commerce customer engagement applications plus advertising and marketing technology channels.

Take advantage of the many benefits a unified customer profile has to offer. The advanced insights made available through a UCP help you to provide personalized solutions, generate potential new customers, and foster meaningful relationships with current customers—all of which can help build customer loyalty and drive more revenue.





To the experience-maker who's always moving forward

At Oracle, we know great experiences come from great inspiration, and we're providing the spark for your next idea. Packed with powerful info, the Spark Series will get you up to speed on core CX concepts—such as unified customer profiles—quickly.

Think of it as a way to hone your understanding before turning your eyes toward a new strategy. Because if anyone's going to create CX gold, it's you.

What will you discover next?

- Essential Strategies for Identity Resolution
- Making Sense of CDPs
- Making Sense of AI in Marketing



About Oracle Advertising and CX

Make every customer interaction matter by connecting all your business data across advertising, marketing, sales, commerce, and service. Oracle Advertising and Customer Experience (CX) is a connected suite of applications that goes beyond traditional [CRM](#) to help you create and nurture lasting customer relationships. Build a complete view of every interaction and every customer, no matter how and when they engage. Empower your entire business to deliver exceptional customer experiences—from acquisition to retention—and everything in between.

Sources

1. [“Digital Commerce for Marketing Leaders 2021,” Gartner Inc., February 8, 2021](#)
2. [Glenn Taylor, “NRF19: 36% of Shoppers Want Better Personalization, but Hesitate to Share Personal Info,” Retail Touchpoints, January 13, 2019](#)
3. [Monique Martin, “Make Better Data Collection Choices: Unified Customer Profile Checklist & CDP,” The Future of Customer Engagement and Experience, accessed on October 31, 2021](#)



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