

Acquia
EXPERIENCE DIGITAL FREEDOM

REINVENTING THE DIGITAL COMMERCE EXPERIENCE

From Transactions to Relationships



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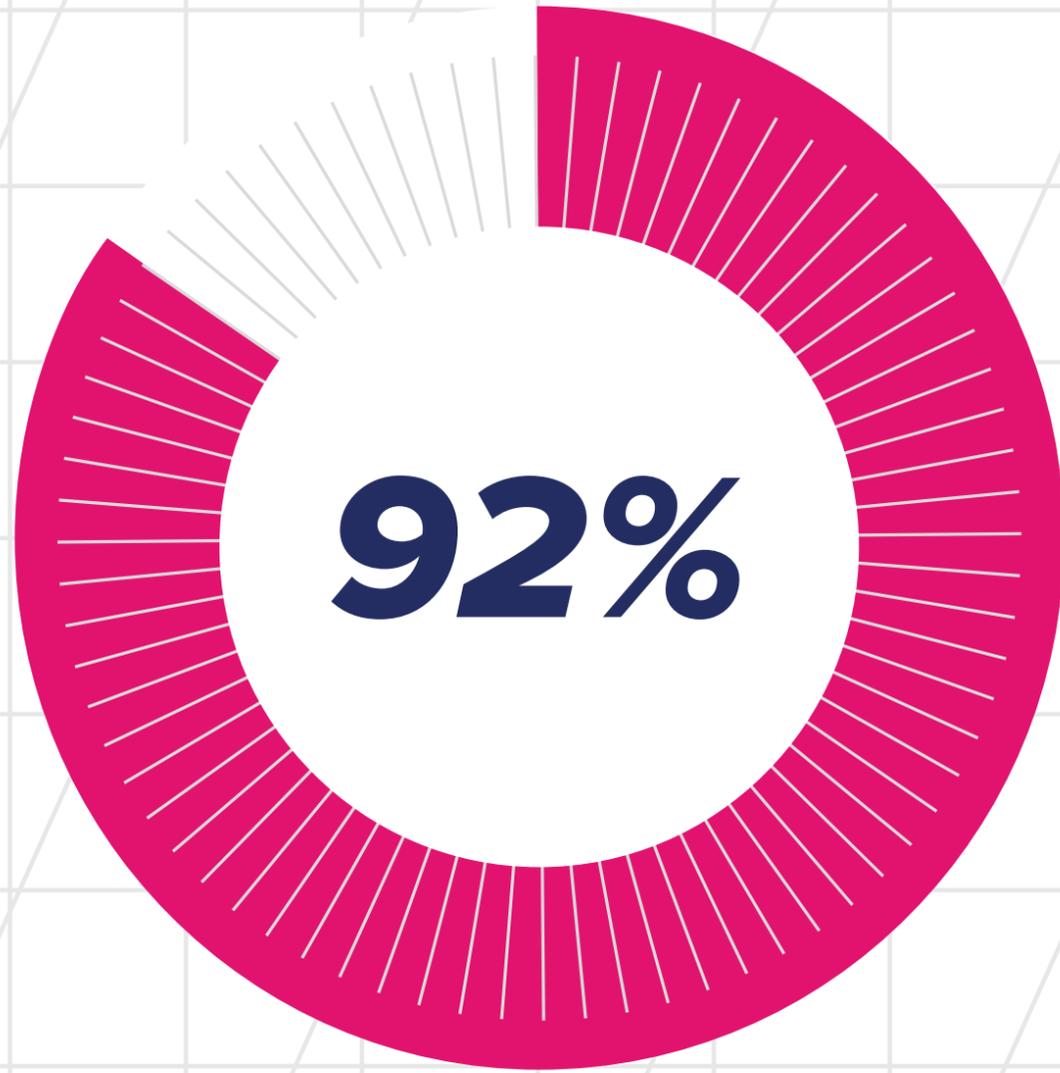
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***COMMERCE: WHERE
CUSTOMER DATA AND
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE UNITE ▶***

SECTION 01

**THE DIGITAL
COMMERCE
EXPERIENCE**





**OF CUSTOMERS SAY
COMPANIES MUST BE
PROACTIVE ABOUT
DATA PROTECTION**

Online commerce has undergone a shift. With in-person experiences all but eliminated, companies have realized that their digital commerce channels need to support the entire customer experience. Ensuring that digital transactions are seamless and secure is certainly part of this experience. Beyond this, however, commerce experiences need to fit into a broader digital experience strategy focused on building and deepening relationships.

Engaging experiences have several key characteristics. They are convenient. They are personalized. And they respect customer data privacy. On the data privacy front, it's not just a question of complying with regulations, like Europe's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) or the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA); it's about paying attention to what customers themselves are saying.

What are they saying, exactly? [Ninety-two percent](#) say companies must be proactive about data protection. [Sixty-four percent](#) say they're more likely to blame the company, not the hackers, in the event of a breach. And [65 percent](#) say they would stop using a brand that

was dishonest about how it uses their data. Creating a sense of confidence about the security of customer data thus plays a key role in the digital commerce experience.

Of course, there's more to it than that. Everyone is trying to differentiate from the Amazon experience, which established the standard for digital commerce. To do that, the creation of experiences around merchandising and the catalog – experiences that fuel lifestyle marketing aimed at increasing loyalty, retention and customer lifetime value – becomes critical. Without that, your site is just another place to buy stuff (that customers could probably find on Amazon).

In this e-book, we'll discuss the challenges facing digital commerce today and the key role that a first-party data strategy plays in overcoming them. We will also discuss the importance of customer data platforms (CDP) in supporting that strategy in a way that meets the needs of CISOs and CMOs alike. By the end, you should understand why digital commerce today demands an AI-powered CDP to succeed.

SECTION 02

**THE CHALLENGES
FACING DIGITAL
COMMERCE TODAY**



Better Digital Experiences Built on Trust and Data

Digital commerce is nothing new (Amazon launched in 1994!), but the pandemic accelerated the need for brands to expand and improve their commerce capabilities. This has meant both making it easier for customers to buy online as well as creating new revenue streams to replace those curtailed or eliminated over the past year.

CREATING COMPELLING DIGITAL COMMERCE EXPERIENCES

Focusing primarily or exclusively on digital transactions has forced brands (in retail, travel and leisure, food and entertainment, education, healthcare, etc.) to compensate for the loss of in-person interactions by creating better, more compelling digital experiences.

Providing a good digital experience takes as its baseline protecting the privacy and security of customer data. Trust is key.

On this foundation, brands then need to continuously evolve the experience so that customers have a reason to return, regardless of whether they plan to make a purchase. Personalization is critical to this evolution.

In order to personalize the commerce experience, brands need to understand their customers. This calls for a robust and sustainable first-party data strategy.

BUILDING A FIRST-PARTY DATA STRATEGY

First-party data is data that your company owns and collects directly from your customers as they interact across your website and other brand channels. Collecting this data requires customer permission and consent, which in turn means reassuring them that sharing their data is safe.

In addition to information that companies get simply in the course of doing business – including any data collected when someone pays or sets up an account – companies also collect information customers willingly share. They collect this data (sometimes called “zero-party data”) either with direct questions or through quizzes, surveys and other types of interactive content. Either way, the rationale for collecting this data is the promise of a better, more personalized experience.

In the past, digital marketers also relied on cookie-based, third-party data. This data was particularly important for customer acquisition, enhancing segmentation and targeting efforts. Data privacy regulations have made it more difficult for sites to collect this data and for marketers to use it. With Google and others phasing out support for third-party cookies, the need for a sustainable, first-party data strategy has never been greater.

INTELLIGENT DATA MANAGEMENT

To provide customers with an optimal digital commerce experience, while protecting the privacy and security of their data, brands need two things:

- / A customer data platform (CDP)** capable of aggregating all relevant customer data, deriving insight from it and operationalizing it to fuel personalization.
- / A commerce engine** tied to a flexible digital experience platform.

Of these two solutions, the CDP is the most critical when it comes to first-party data strategy.

SECTION 03

***THE KEY TO
A FIRST-PARTY
DATA STRATEGY***



CREATING A DATA FOUNDATION FOR DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

A first-party data strategy should guide and inform the collection, management, analysis and operationalization of data. To realize such a strategy, brands need to have their data house in order. By aggregating, organizing, cleansing and activating customer data from all sources (website, CRM, customer service portal and so on), a CDP provides this strategy with the most basic foundation.

Deriving insight from data, either to enable personalization on the individual customer level or to build segment-based campaigns at the audience level, calls for a CDP that features AI-driven analytics capabilities. Without a CDP underlying an overall digital experience strategy – one dependent on first-party data – brands cannot maintain 360° customer profiles or create consistently engaging customer experiences.



CASE STUDY

GODIVA AND ACQUIA CDP



SITUATION

GODIVA wanted to unify data across digital channels and brick & mortar locations to provide an even more engaging experience across all channels, increase loyalty and drive marketing ROI.

CHALLENGE

In March 2020, **GODIVA** proactively closed its boutiques and **GODIVA Cafés** in North America to protect its employees and consumers against the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures meant that **GODIVA** needed to quickly supercharge their digital commerce operations to meet consumer demand.

RESULTS

GODIVA's targeted marketing campaigns realized numerous benefits from Acquia CDP's unified customer data and analytical insights:

- /// The agility needed to move to a digital commerce model when COVID-19 hit.
- /// Doubling of email open rates and tripling of email clickthrough rates among boutique-only shoppers.
- /// 621% increase in return on advertising spend for a Mother's Day campaign.
- /// The ability to identify leading acquisition products, resulting in one of the brand's most successful Instagram posts.



PROTECTING CUSTOMER DATA PROTECTS THE BRAND

The data centralization enabled by a CDP is critical for creating customer profiles, as mentioned, but it is also critical for complying with data privacy regulations. Both GDPR and CCPA provide customers the right to have their data removed from company systems within a month of the request.

With data scattered across multiple silos, comprehensively and verifiably responding to such requests can be challenging. Without knowing precisely where data lives, it can take weeks or even months to fully erase or amend a single customer's data. Indeed, there's no guarantee that the request will even be honored in full. CDPs can identify the upstream and downstream systems where customer data needs to be deleted.

Without a CDP serving as a single source of truth, brands either have to custom-build data processors to handle such requests or outsource their fulfillment to third parties. These options are far more expensive and time-consuming than using a CDP.

The ability to extract value from first-party data and leverage it to personalize digital commerce experiences goes hand in hand with the ability to manage and protect that data on behalf of the customer and the enterprise. It is for this reason that a CDP serves the purposes of both marketing and security leaders in your organization.

SECTION 04

***THE BRIDGE
BETWEEN CMO
AND CISO***

A CRUCIAL PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ENTERPRISE

The ongoing digitalization of marketing and the rise of martech are forcing CIOs and CMOs to work more closely together. The CIO has begun to work with the CMO to control the brand's IT footprint. The CMO has begun to work with the CIO to ensure availability of and access to the IT resources that digital marketing initiatives demand.

The outsized importance of issues surrounding data privacy and cybersecurity has led to the emergence of a specialized role: chief information security officer (CISO). In order to protect consumer data, ensure privacy and compliance and, above all, maintain trust in the brand, the CMO must forge a close alliance with the CISO. Among other things, this means supporting security efforts by enlisting the CISO's aid in selecting and deploying marketing technology.

A robust CDP brings the CMO and the CISO together. The CMO wants to create great, personalized digital experiences at scale while honoring customer needs for trust. The CISO wants to protect the business and its customers, which includes reducing regulatory, legal and financial risk. And both the CMO and CISO want to protect the brand.

To support the partnership between the CMO and CISO, a CDP needs to have several capabilities to support this partnership:

- It must easily connect to every relevant data source within the enterprise.**

Ease of connectivity is crucial for the development of a composable enterprise architecture – that is, one relying on modularity in support of agility.

- It must track and manage data lineage.**

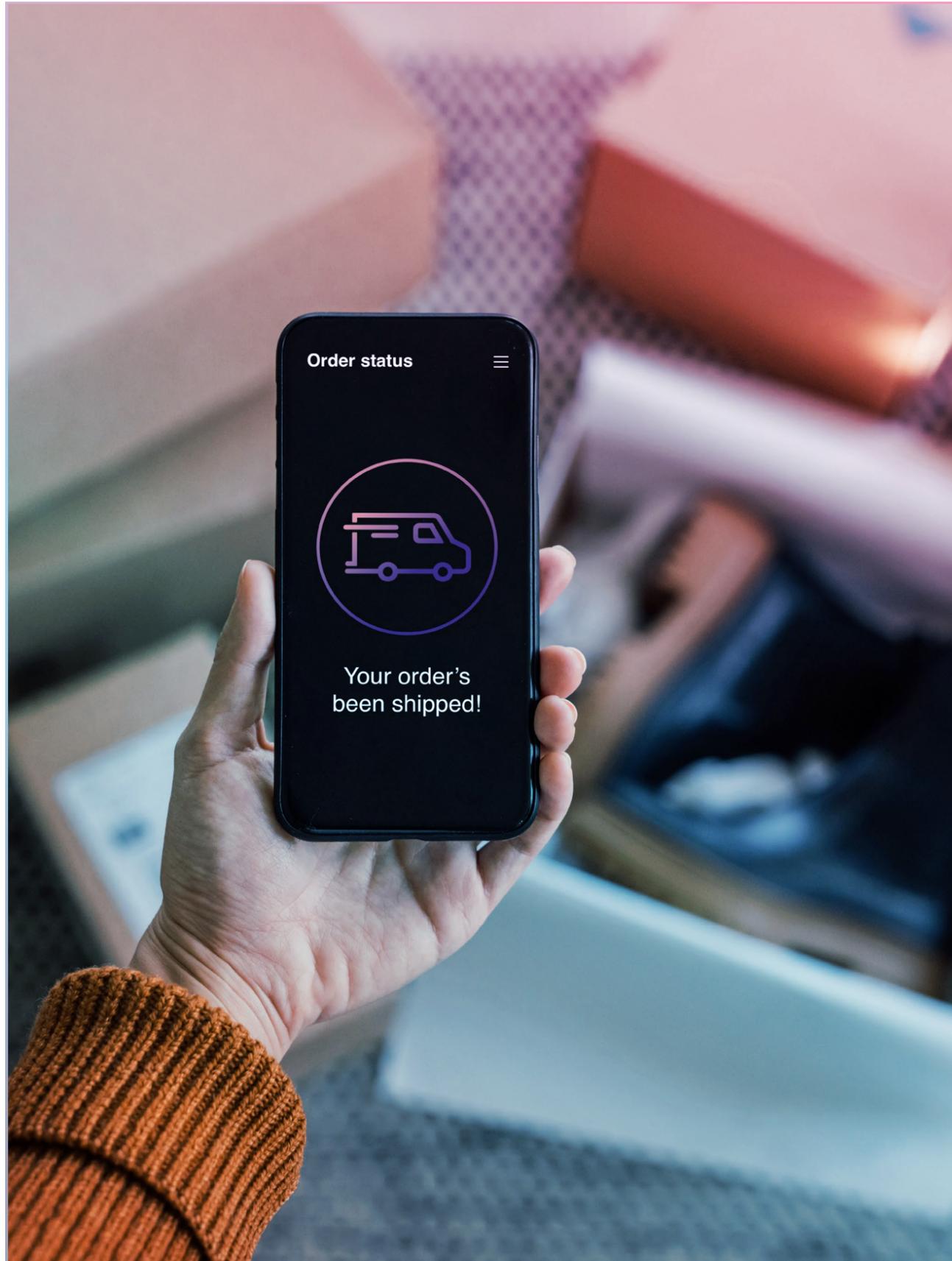
A CDP isn't simply a repository for data. It is the single source of truth for data in the enterprise. For this reason, the CDP must serve as a comprehensive data management solution.

- It must be secure from the ground up.**

This means meeting the requirements of all relevant security certifications.

SECTION 05

**COMMERCE:
WHERE CUSTOMER
DATA AND CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCE UNITE**



CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS ARE HIGH

Deepening or developing a first-party data strategy reflects a broader need for transformation across the digital marketing landscape. This transformation impacts every moment in the customer lifecycle, from acquisition to retention, and calls for placing less emphasis on transactions and more emphasis on building relationships. Digital commerce sites have a special role to play in this transformation as the place where digital transactions, digital trust and digital experience come together.

Customer expectations for basic digital commerce experiences are very high. They expect transactions to be streamlined (“one-click buying” set the tone over 20 years ago) and their personal data, from payments to preferences, to be protected. They also expect it to be easy to find what they are looking for, which makes intelligent search functionality key.

On the experience front, customers want personalization. Personalization can mean being remembered (“Welcome back!”), consistently receiving relevant recommendations or getting white-glove service should an issue arise.

Delivering all of the above calls for an integrated solution offering a flexible front end supporting all levels of personalization, an enterprise-grade commerce engine and a data management platform that is not only intelligent but, above all, secure.

Acquia Digital Commerce, created in collaboration with key partners, provides everything you need. As a composable commerce solution, it gives businesses the freedom to integrate Acquia's Digital Experience Platform with modular services, such as Lucidworks' AI-powered product recommendations engine and commercetools' headless commerce.

Acquia Open DXP, with its flexible architecture, codeless site-building tools and personalization capabilities, helps organizations bring engaging digital commerce experiences to life. What's more, Acquia CDP provides a full range of data management capabilities as well as an AI engine for advanced data analytics.

You need a commerce solution that is agile, flexible and scalable. You also need one that allows for standardization and governance, ensuring the maintenance of brand standards, regulatory compliance and robust security.

Above all, you need a commerce solution built for innovation and growth now and into the future. Acquia Digital Commerce is that solution.



HOW'S YOUR EXPERIENCE?

Give your customers the experience they demand — or someone else will.

LEARN MORE ▶

Acquia

ACQUIA.COM

ABOUT ACQUIA

Acquia is the open digital experience platform that enables organizations to build, host, analyze and communicate with their customers at scale through websites and digital applications. As the trusted open source leader, we use adaptive intelligence to produce better business outcomes for CX leaders.

