

# Kickstart 2022

E-COMMERCE GUIDE



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# Introduction





As you dust off the glitter of a well-celebrated New Year's Eve and hang up your fresh 2022 calendars, you're probably already buzzing with big plans for how to uplevel your business in the coming year. 2022 is full of potential for commerce businesses: You have a clean slate and the opportunity to create the marketing plan you always knew could grow your business like never before.

Millions of people became online shoppers out of necessity in 2020 (and out of habit in 2021), changing the shopping landscape forever. You have the chance to take full advantage of this monumental shift and win over the loyalty, and wallets, of countless consumers in 2022.

Bloomreach is here to help you not only shape that plan, but execute on it as well. We've invested in truly understanding what drives commerce growth: rich customer data and insights, a comprehensive understanding of product data, and the ability to tie that data together so teams can execute quickly.

With the help of this guide, and the [Bloomreach Commerce Experience Cloud](#), 2022 can be your best year yet for growth. We'll cover the most important topics and strategies for success in the years to come, how you can leverage technology to achieve your goals faster than ever before, and even outline how real businesses have seen success with these methodologies.

Let's dive into how exactly you can blow your customers' (and boss') expectations out of the water and see amazing results.



# Making Good on the Promise of Personalization in 2022



# Making Good on the Promise of Personalization in 2022

Personalization will likely rank as one of the most hyped-up words of the century — but the conversation around personalization can be so much more than a series of clichés strung together.

Personalization, or at least true personalization, is more than just a buzzword or a box to check to satisfy your leadership team. When personalization serves as your guiding principle, some pretty incredible things can happen (trust us, we've seen it in action). In our world, personalization is quite literally the key that unlocks growth for your company and allows for easy optimization of the customer experience.

**E-commerce personalization is the practice of using commerce data responsibly to get to know, guide, and impress your customers with experiences that are so relevant and contextual, they feel like magic.**

**E-commerce personalization spans cross-channel, on-site, and in-app, resulting in measurable journeys that engage and lead customers through brand awareness to product discovery to repeat purchases.**

For us, personalization is more than just something to tack on, it's really what moves the customer experience forward and drives results for your business. Think of the gold standard of commerce experiences as a great novel. Is it bland, predictable, and utterly uninspiring? No! It's full of delightfully unexpected twists and turns that transport the reader to another world.

With personalization, your commerce experience can take shoppers on a journey just as thrilling.

## **“Know Me, Guide Me, Wow Me”**

Let’s dive a little deeper into the Bloomreach definition of e-commerce personalization, starting with our “know me, guide me, wow me” approach to escorting customers through the journey.

### **“Know Me”**

Much like a good author spends ample time familiarizing a reader with their protagonist, learning about your customers is the first step of e-commerce personalization.

This is achieved, at scale, through the ethical collection of commerce data. Without this data, you’re just guessing at what your consumers want. What data points actually help you get to know customers? Website traffic, on-site interactions (i.e., page visits), interactions with email newsletters or other marketing emails, and many other key touchpoints that the customer has with your company.

Additionally, the “know me” concept must extend to all corners of your company — necessary data must not only be collected, but shared across your entire technology stack for all key stakeholders to see and understand.

### **“Guide Me”**

It’s good business practice, now that consumers have given you their data, to use it to make their lives easier. This can be achieved by leveraging personalization to guide customers to experiences with your brand that their data suggests they would enjoy.

If your collected customer data leads you to infer that a customer lives in a cold-weather climate and has previously shopped for sweatshirts, use that data accordingly. It's obviously best to showcase sweatshirts, hats, mittens, and other cold-weather apparel instead of sandals, sunglasses, and swimsuits in your website's product recommendations.

**The point of personalization is to build additional brand loyalty and help facilitate the customer journey. Your personalization efforts must have those two end goals in mind at all times.**

## **"Wow Me"**

Imagine walking into your favorite brick-and-mortar clothing store and watching the shelves rearrange until all of your wishlist items were prominently displayed in your exact size and preferred color.

While this isn't possible in a physical space, e-commerce personalization can achieve this in a digital one. Not only that, but if you know your customers and have guided them appropriately, that means you have the necessary background knowledge to make predictions about other things they're likely going to be interested in (e.g., shoes, jewelry, belts, scarves, etc.), all in their preferred style and size.

This is beyond "customers also bought" — this is true personalization, and the possibilities are nearly limitless.

## **Using Personalization to Unlock Commerce Growth**

Being truly customer centric means focusing on providing joy. Joy is powerful because it results in customer loyalty, and loyal customers are going to engage with your personalized email campaigns, add your personalized product recommendations to their cart, participate in your loyalty program,



and even repeatedly purchase products, thus increasing lifetime value (LTV) for your company.

And if your company just isn't there yet with e-commerce personalization? Don't worry — we've outlined a few simple steps to help you get started:

## 1. Start With Customer Centricity

Many companies and teams claim to be customer centric, but that requires being aligned on goals and KPIs, which is often impossible to achieve when they're incentivized by channel. When it comes to personalization, there's a stark difference between channel-centric companies and customer-centric ones.

A channel-centric approach creates data silos and a fragmented picture of the customer, which is a common problem in today's digital commerce marketplace. By turning to a customer data platform (CDP), or a [CDP + marketing automation solution like Bloomreach Engagement](#), you can break down silos and get a complete picture of your customer.

## 2. Think Beyond the Easy Win

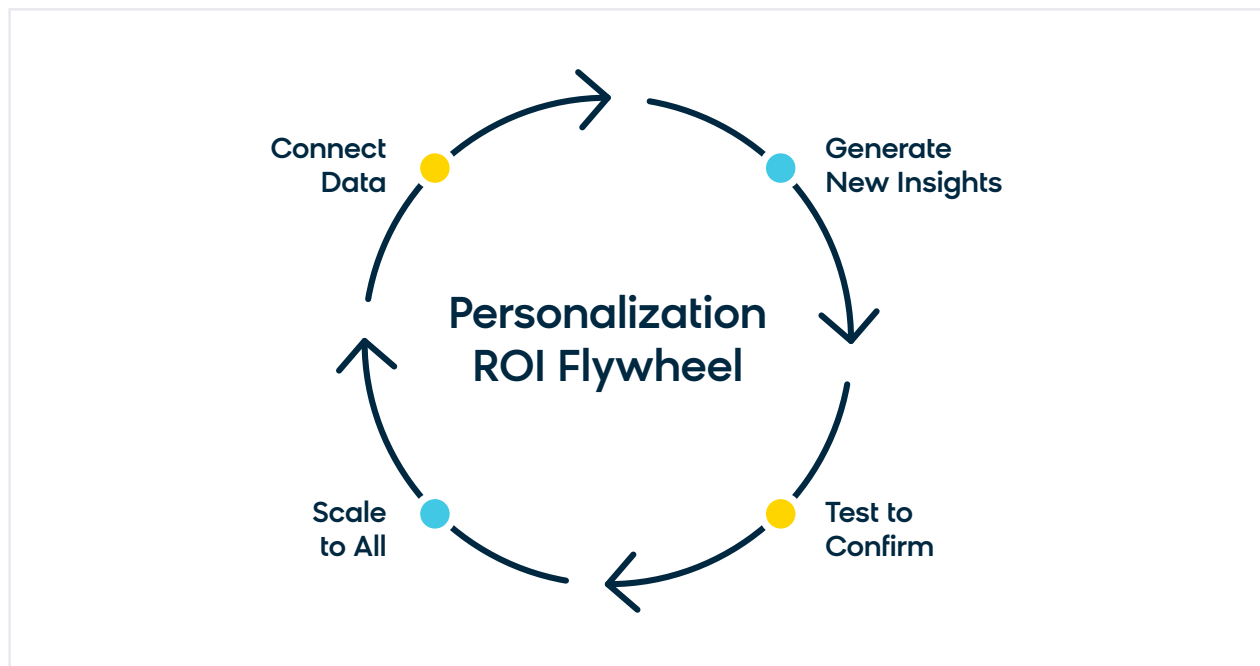
When personalizing experiences to bring joy to your customers, you always want to get started with some easy wins early on. However, those easy early wins are not always fully representative of the bigger or broader picture. It's easy to begin your personalization journey and get very excited about increased email open rates or landing page conversion rates — and we're not saying you shouldn't — but don't lose sight of the fact that personalization is so much bigger than just a couple of metrics.

Good commerce-driving teams don't let these early wins silo their personalization efforts. It's tempting to see these victories and invest more

in those channels while not realizing that you're actually creating a more inconsistent customer experience across the board.

### 3. The Short and the Long of It

There will be short-term victories with e-commerce personalization (and those are absolutely worth celebrating!), but be mindful that they also don't disrupt your long-term strategy. Remember: Winning with e-commerce personalization is truly a long-term process.



The Personalization ROI Flywheel shows you exactly how the personalization process should take place: CONNECT data to generate insights for your use case, test to confirm, and scale to all. But, it's also important to remember that you should be doing this for every use case, so you should be constantly coming back to the Flywheel to re-spin it. It's a simple, scalable process that should never be abandoned as your company looks to dive deeper with personalization and pursue more successful use cases.

**A channel-centric approach creates data silos and a fragmented picture of the customer, which is a common problem in today's digital commerce marketplace.**

## 4. Learn the Stages of Personalization

Now that we've covered our foundations, let's get into the different stages of personalization.

### Stage 1: One to All

These are static-based campaigns, with no variations in the content being dispersed to your customers. The ROI on campaigns like this is also traditionally low as the content is only delivered on one channel. This stage involves virtually no personalization: Teams create content or campaigns in the hopes of connecting with the masses rather than using commerce data and your technology stack to connect with individuals on a more personal level.

### Stage 2: One to Many

Here, campaign rules will determine the next interaction with customers. Generally speaking, these campaigns are a result of disconnected teams and tech stacks that are more focused on individual KPIs than the ultimate goal of connecting the customer experience. These rules can help scale some personalization, but it's nowhere near what customers expect.

### Stage 3: One to Some

With model-based campaigns, you're starting to get into the more modern personalization examples that companies strive for. Each channel has a variety of content based on the channel itself, the messaging, and personas. Companies at this stage are able to run audience-based segmentation campaigns, but there is still minimal integration between channels.

### Stage 4: One to Few

In this stage, customers finally begin to experience a connection between the online and offline messaging of your brand. Companies in this stage are able to communicate with customers on an interactive basis by leveraging

model optimization and response messaging. There's also automated segmentation for campaigns, meaning that consumers at different stages of the customer journey can receive messages more tailored to their previous experiences with the brand.

**It's worth noting that many companies that are committed to e-commerce personalization efforts find themselves here — and that's great! But the final stage is what happens when companies dare to dream a little bit bigger with personalization.**

## **Stage 5: One to One**

In this final and most optimal stage, customers experience personalized content across all channels where they interact with a company. Communications are informed by commerce data (i.e., interest and interactions), and are delivered at the optimal time for the customer. The results are experiences so granular that customers feel like they're the only shopper your brand cares about. For the modern commerce team, this is the ultimate goal.

# BREWDOG

## SUCCESS STORY



## Real-World Win: Brew Dog

One team especially concerned with correctly leveraging personalization is email marketing — with unforgiving KPIs like clicks, engagement, and conversions (that ultimately lead to revenue for their brand), there's little room for error. And, there's no magic wand to wave to make customers click on an email or make a purchase.

[BrewDog](#), a Bloomreach customer and an award-winning Scottish craft beer company, leveraged its online channel to help reach an incredible €215 million in total gross revenue in 2019. To achieve this, they turned to personalized email marketing.

### Testing With Bloomreach Engagement

In cooperation with Bloomreach partner Pricewise, BrewDog rolled out a data-driven email marketing campaign that generated 13.8% more revenue in its completely random A/B split test.

BrewDog took a group of 80,000 customers and divided them so that half received a non-personalized version of an email, while the other half received an upgraded version based on personalized data. Specifically, the personalized 40,000 customers were split based on:

- | Web activity

- | Recent purchases

- | BrewDog investor status

Personalized data made all the difference. The customers who received the personalized email clicked on it 15.6% more, had a 11.5% higher conversion rate, and generated 13.8% more revenue compared to the 40,000 customers who received the same non-personalized email.

Of course, their use of personalization hasn't stopped there. By leveraging Bloomreach Engagement, BrewDog has been able to experiment with personalized subject lines, content, and much more.

**€215 million**  
**in total gross revenue**  
**in 2019**

# Getting Started in 7 Steps

If your company is new to personalization and this is sounding a little overwhelming, don't worry. The hardest part of adopting any new e-commerce strategy is the initial planning. Here's a sample roadmap you can apply when starting your personalization journey in 2022:

## Step 1: Identify

Specifically, identify where and how you want to personalize your website or your marketing communications — always keep your customers and what will drive loyalty in mind in this stage.

## Step 2: Research

Gather all of the information you could possibly need about e-commerce personalization technologies, what they specifically do, and how they fit into your company goals. Choose a vendor that is committed to facilitating personalization at scale and can act as a true partner for your business.

## Step 3: Assign

Ensure that your company is able to assign enough resources to the project at hand. And don't just think of resources in terms of finances or money. Deciding who should oversee the project, how gains will be measured, and what teams from across your organization will be involved is key.

## Step 4: Define

Personalization efforts require a long-term vision and optimization process. Define that vision and process here with your commerce-driving team — what are your long term goals with personalization?

## Step 5: Start

Now for the grunt work. Start to segment and personalize your site and



marketing communications. Take careful note of which areas of your site benefit the most from personalization and which key metrics improve.

## **Step 6: Continue**

Keep going! If you're getting the results that you hoped for, continue doing what you're doing. If you're not, re assess and optimize the process as needed. Making small changes to the original strategy can be very beneficial if those changes are data-driven and you believe they can help improve your metrics.

## **Step 7: Scale**

Now it's time to go big. You've made all of the necessary adjustments and you should have 100% confidence in your personalization strategy and the ability to recreate your positive results at scale.



# Going Cookieless in the New Year



# Going Cookieless in the New Year

You might want to consider cutting down on cookies for your New Year's resolution (digital cookies only, of course). As major players like Google deprecate their support of third-party cookies in the coming year, marketers and advertisers will have to get creative to reach new audiences and build loyal customer bases.

Of course, weaning off reliance on traditional, third-party marketing tactics is easier said than done — and we know it'll be a staged, slow process for most companies. But, by taking the first steps in 2022, you'll set yourself up for success as Google's (and other) deadlines loom.

## Don't Let Google's Privacy Delay Slow Your Marketing

In the summer of 2021, [Google sent shockwaves](#) through the digital marketing world by announcing that it would not phase out third-party cookies beginning in 2022 as previously planned. Now, Google Chrome is expected to phase out third-party tracking in two stages that won't be complete until late 2023. The delay certainly buys Google (and businesses) time to figure things out and make more long-term plans.

While companies like [Bloomreach customer musicMagpie](#) have already begun to prepare for the new privacy-centric web, many companies are still in the process of figuring out their plan for changes to third-party tracking. If you haven't thought through how to wean your business off of third-party

cookies yet, don't worry — you have plenty of time to catch up in time for Google's deadline.

Regardless of where your timeline stands, it cannot be overstated how important privacy is to shoppers. Online data privacy concerns are on the rise among consumers, and fines for failing to comply with data privacy laws and regulations have skyrocketed as well.

While making the leap to a cookieless marketing strategy can seem daunting, we have a few tips to kickstart your efforts and make the transition a successful one.

## Three Strategies to Win in a Cookieless World

There are few things more important than the connection your customers have with your brand. Having a connected offline and online experience is essential, and in a cookieless world, your company needs a new approach to fostering customer relationships. To avoid watching your loyal customers become strangers, here are three key strategies for your company to employ as the cookie crumbles.

### 1. Maintain Your Data Quality

Your company's data hygiene is of the utmost importance in 2022. While a company could previously track a customer's clicks and purchases through third-party cookies, this is no longer the case on Firefox and Safari (and soon Google). What's more, Safari is also limiting first-party cookies created with Javascript, which impacts almost every Javascript-implemented tool on your website.

Maintaining data quality in a cookieless world and reconstructing that picture of the customer is crucial to continued success. This can be achieved by leveraging a CDP to consolidate and unify first- and zero-party data in its stead to save your marketing from becoming derailed.

## 2. Respect Customer Preference

As fines soar for data privacy issues and security breaches, your company must re-center its focus on respecting the preference of customers. When the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into effect in the European Union in 2018 (along with other similar laws that followed suit not long after), everything changed in regards to customer privacy. The need for real-time consent management and SaaS solutions that are fully secure is at an all-time high.

Consent management is a system or process for allowing customers to determine what personal data they are willing to share with your company. Your platform needs to be able to update consents in real time and give customers granular control over what information they want shared with your company. This will help customers build trust with your brand. These consents are used in all customer communication channels and are evaluated at the moment each campaign is executed.

All of your company's efforts to stay up to speed in our new cookieless world will be for naught without a secure SaaS solution. Bloomreach Engagement is GDPR certified and we hold a slew of security certifications that prove our commitment to protecting your data.

## 3. Switch to a Proactive Approach

While maintaining data quality and respecting customer preferences are largely reactive in nature and required for companies to stay afloat in a cookieless world, embracing these new privacy standards can also be proactive in nature and help businesses drive growth.

A CDP + marketing automation will allow privacy to become a differentiator and competitive strength for your business by allowing you to:

**Leverage micro-opportunities with weblayers.** This can be done for customers at almost any stage of the customer journey so that value can be delivered when needed. Displaying the right information to consumers

at the right time helps facilitate a sale and can also encourage brand loyalty. Weblayers are also a great tool to collect zero-party data for future personalized marketing purposes.

**Know your customers better than anyone.** Our customer data model is fully customizable with 255 customer attributes. It has unlimited segmentations, predictions, and aggregates. You will never run out of information that you can collect and add to a specific customer profile.

**Predict what you can't track.** Use predictions to scale learnings from known customers to anonymous visitors. Identify patterns of customer behavior and target customers who are likely to make a purchase or are at risk of churning — even without a complete picture of their behavior. This can increase ROI and capture customer attention by reaching them at the right time on the right channel.



# musicMagpie

## SUCCESS STORY

## Real-World Win: musicMagpie

Bloomreach customer musicMagpie wanted to stay ahead of the curve as it moved towards a more privacy-centric world wide web. In late 2020, prior to even implementing or purchasing a CDP, musicMagpie already had a cookieless future in mind.

musicMagpie knew that without browser cookies, it would lose the ability to recognize repeat visitors to its website. This would mean potentially losing a lot of valuable data. The overall impact of cookie limitations is that companies will have lower quality data to work with, but what does that mean in practice?

- | Companies risk making the wrong strategic decisions
- | There will be a higher cost per acquisition
- | Personalization efforts will not be at the same level as they once were
- | Budget allocation decisions may not be of the same quality

To combat the changing data landscape and future proof their marketing efforts, musicMagpie turned to Bloomreach Engagement to collect and unify musicMagpie's siloed data and allow it to be used for actionable marketing campaigns to help drive revenue.

It was also the perfect platform to accomplish musicMagpie's goal of being prepared for the changes to third-party tracking. There were three main needs that musicMagpie addressed with Bloomreach Engagement right away: tracking performance, building ad audiences, and managing consents.

musicMagpie got ahead of the game with the changes to third-party cookies looming because of proactive planning and the adoption of Bloomreach Engagement. This paradigm shift to begin thinking about customer-based marketing rather than channel-based efforts must start now, in 2022.

And while your business may be heavily reliant on third-party (or even first-party) data, there's another source of data that's incredibly valuable that might remain untapped by your business. Let's explore the world of possibilities with zero-party data.





# Zero's the Hero: How to Win With Zero-Party Data



# Zero's the Hero: How to Win With Zero-Party Data

2022 is not the year to rest on your laurels or rely on stale tactics and data to hit your revenue goals and win your customers' loyalty. Luckily, we've got the perfect zero-party data tactics to help you ring in the new year.

## The Importance of Zero-Party Data in 2022

As the digital landscape changes and evolves, so do the rules businesses need to play by. One of the biggest shifts of the last five years surrounds the use of consumer data, how it's collected, and what types of data businesses need to be successful. After the fall of third-party data in the wake of policy changes by Google and Apple, along with new regulations like GDPR, 2022 will be dominated by a different kind of data: zero-party data.

**Zero-party data** is data that a customer intentionally and proactively shares with a brand. It can include preference center data, purchase intentions, personal contexts, and how an individual wants to be recognized by the brand. [Forrester Research](#) was the first to introduce this term, and collecting zero-party data has since become increasingly important to companies across the globe.

This up-and-coming, ethically sourced data can fuel tons of fresh and exciting customer-centric initiatives in the new year — but only if you're using it to its full potential. You'll not only need to collect this data from your loyal customers, you'll need a solid strategy for leveraging it as well.

# The Benefits of a Zero-Party Data Strategy

As we've highlighted before, there's a value exchange that exists between customers and e-commerce professionals: Customers exchange their information and their data for a better, more streamlined shopping experience. Customers want personalized content, but they want to be in control of what data is shared in order to obtain that personalized experience with a company.

Collecting zero-party data eliminates the creepiness customers can often experience with a brand. Is there anything worse than that sinking feeling you get when you realize, "Whoa...I don't remember telling them that"? Yikes.

A good zero-party data strategy eliminates that creepiness — because the data collected is freely offered directly from the customer — and eliminates the guesswork in customizing consumer experiences. It also helps companies measure and build trust with their customers.

To launch a successful zero-party data strategy, take the following tips into consideration:

- | Align it with your overall customer data, content, and marketing strategy
- | Combine zero-party data with your first-party data by integrating with existing systems
- | Clearly communicate the value exchange
- | Make it a part of your overall omnichannel experience



## SUCCESS STORY

# Real-World Win: My Jewellery

Let's explore a successful zero-party data strategy in practice with Bloomreach customer [My Jewellery](#).

My Jewellery, a clothing and jewelry retailer based in The Netherlands, is an industry leader in the zero-party data collection game. It used Bloomreach Engagement to create an ingenious method for zero-party data collection that's both entertaining to its customer base and respectful to data privacy.

## The Style Profile Test

This interactive, ethical data collection method has upgraded customer personalization, increased customer service, and curbed the need for risk taking in data collection for My Jewellery. What's the style profile test? It's a game that optimizes the customer experience without invading privacy simply by letting customers decide whether or not they like an item shown to them. Once a customer provides an email address, the results of the test are calculated and the customer is provided with a personalized style profile.

And it's been a hit — the Style Profile Test has been met with rave reviews from My Jewellery's loyal customer base.

Not only is the test useful in terms of data collection for the company, it's also a fun way for the consumer to make decisions about the company's top products. Customers have even commented that it makes product decision-making easier.

Bloomreach Engagement uses data that was collected from the customer (as well as other behavioral data) to personalize on-site recommendations, email campaigns, and Facebook ads. This ensures a more personalized e-commerce experience thanks mostly to zero-party data.



Conclusion





# Conclusion

We hope you now feel a bit more prepared (and excited) for the year ahead of us. And while the last several years have proved that none of us can guess what's going to happen next, we can hedge our bets by adopting a customer-centric ethos that will see us through both "precedented" and unprecedented times. At Bloomreach, we believe that putting customers and their experience first is good business — and that you'll see great results by doing the same.

If you're interested in learning more about how Bloomreach can help your company craft amazing, unexpectedly delightful customer experiences that wow and inspire loyalty for years to come, [schedule a commitment-free demo](#) today. There's no better way to kick off 2022 than having an ally like Bloomreach join your team.



Bloomreach is the world's #1 Commerce Experience Cloud, empowering brands to deliver customer journeys so personalized, they feel like magic.

It offers a suite of products that drive true personalization and digital commerce growth, including: Discovery, offering AI-driven search and merchandising; Content, offering a headless CMS; and Engagement, offering a leading CDP and marketing automation solution. Together, these solutions combine the power of unified customer and product data with the speed and scale of AI-optimization, enabling revenue-driving digital commerce experiences that convert on any channel and every journey.

Bloomreach serves over 850 global brands including Albertsons, Bosch, Puma, FC Bayern München, and Marks & Spencer.



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**GET STARTED**



