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Simplifying Drupal Website Personalization: A Guide for IT & Marketing

A personalization tool optimized for Drupal can better serve both IT and Marketing.

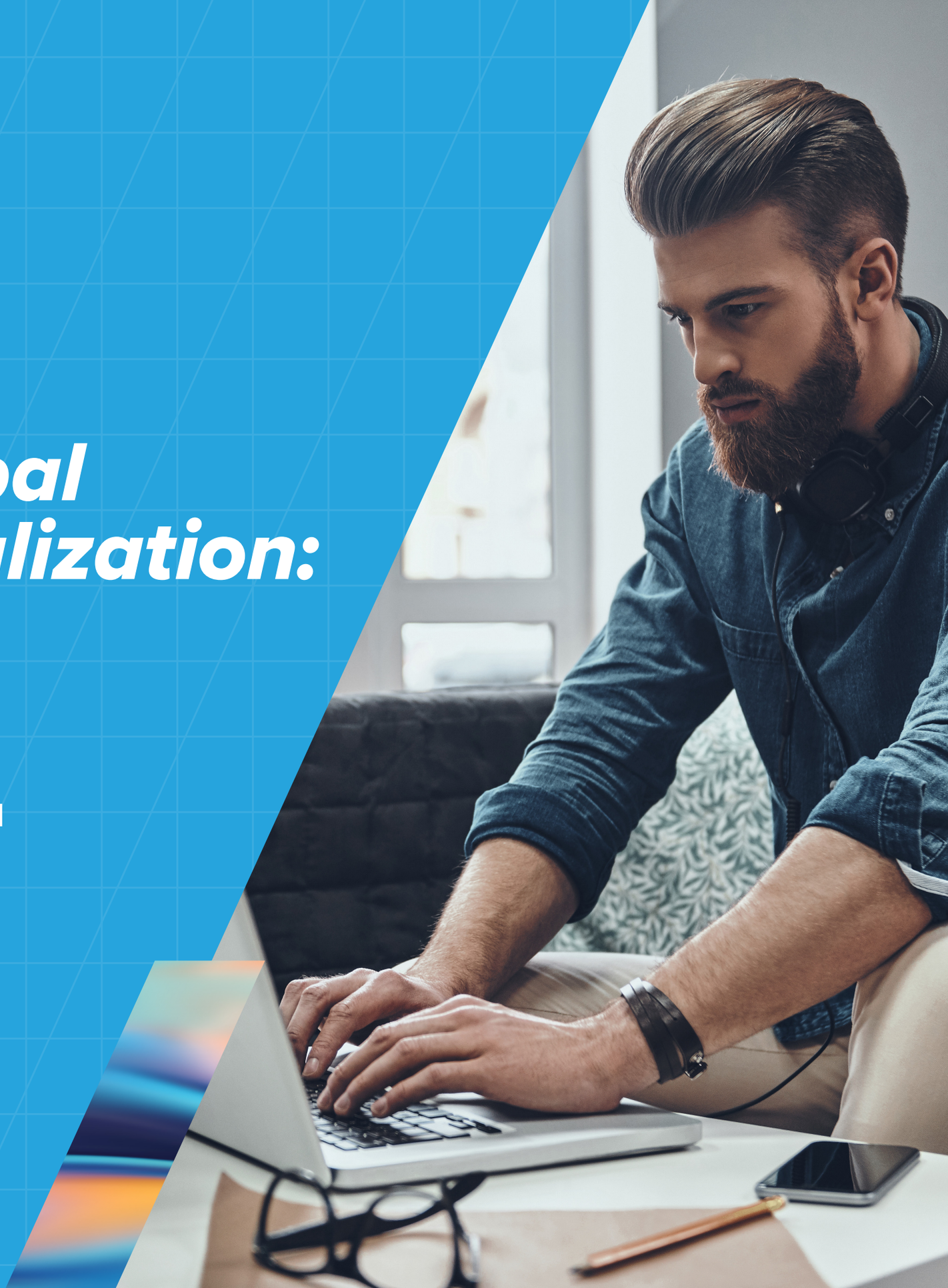




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INTRODUCTION

If you're an IT developer, you may often feel that the goals of your marketing colleagues seem to conflict with the initiatives you are responsible for.

Since it has become so critical to deliver high quality customer experience (CX) and personalization for all your online visitors, however, forging an effective working relationship with them is a must.

The fact is, CX has become a significant competitive battlefield. So, to cede ground here by not addressing it will almost certainly put the company at a disadvantage. Personalization is key to delivering a compelling CX through your website and apps.

And to succeed with personalization, IT developers and marketers should be on the same page about how to proceed.

Certainly, both IT developers and marketers face pressure to deliver for the company even as they encounter a range of challenges. But if the people in each role took a little more time to understand the challenges facing their counterparts, they just might accomplish greater successes.



IT DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

IT developers confront a host of issues each day, and some of their duties are reactive. Daily responsibilities may include fielding multiple user requests, managing complex processes or ensuring a high level of security. Too often, there's little time to be proactive.

In addition, many of the back-end tools that IT developers use don't integrate with each other or allow much customization. These barriers cause a drain on both financial resources and personnel, creating higher level problems for the business.

When it comes to personalization, there are yet even more challenges to factor in. First of all, the technology needs to be easy to implement and support. The last thing that a WebOps team needs or wants is to implement a technology that is too technical for a marketing manager to easily use. That will just create more work for everyone in the long run – both on the IT developer side as well as the marketing side.

Ensuring effective collaboration can be a challenge with many personalization tools. When someone runs a campaign they weren't supposed to – or personalizes a section of the website that someone was already personalizing – that can throw a wrench into the process.



If not implemented carefully, some customers may experience the dreaded “flash of content” when the original content shows for a split second before the personalized content is displayed. And, of course, it’s important to make sure such glitches won’t negatively impact the overall load time on a given page or the site as a whole, compounding the problem.

API integration is important as well. It’s essential to have a reliable, secure process for obtaining the data the business is collecting, either by having it automatically transmitted on a regular basis or by simply going in and accessing it when needed.

However, sometimes the tools involved are so powerful and complex that it’s easy to get overloaded with options. That makes it harder to determine which option is best for your needs.



MARKETING CHALLENGES

Businesses rely on marketers to implement the strategies and campaigns that keep your organization competitive and financial resources flowing – but marketers often need the help of talented developers to achieve their goals. Consider some of the challenges marketers face.

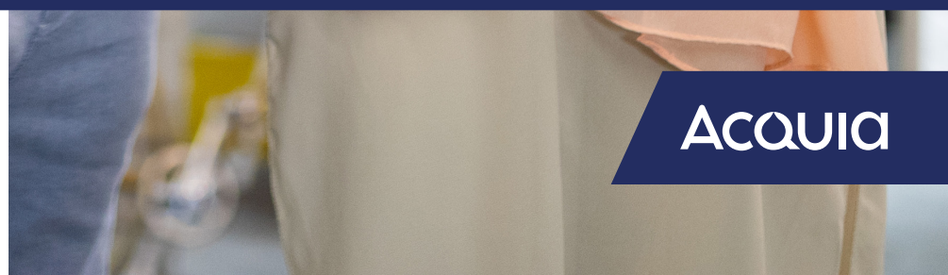
First of all, marketers must provide a more compelling and rewarding CX. As mentioned earlier, a key way to provide that captivating experience is through personalization that prospects, customers and visitors find helpful and useful.

However, that's not always easy to do. Audience data is frequently spread across disparate systems, making it difficult for marketers to get a holistic understanding of buyer behavior and interests. Content also exists across disconnected systems and departments, preventing marketers from accessing and using the most effective content to deliver truly personalized customer experiences.

Marketing software may offer a solution around data, content or context – but not all three.



And even marketers armed with appropriate strategy and technologies still have to work under the constraints of IT resources, which can pose a barrier to business success.



THE RIGHT TOOLS CAN ADDRESS IT CHALLENGES WITH PERSONALIZATION

Again, for an IT developer, being asked to implement a bevy of new marketing initiatives on top of their already heavy workload puts them in a difficult position.

Contrary to what some stakeholders may expect, a developer can't simply snap their fingers to make personalization happen. Often, the tools IT has on hand to implement an initiative like this are somewhat restricting or might not allow as much customization as is needed.



BENEFITS FOR IT DEVELOPERS

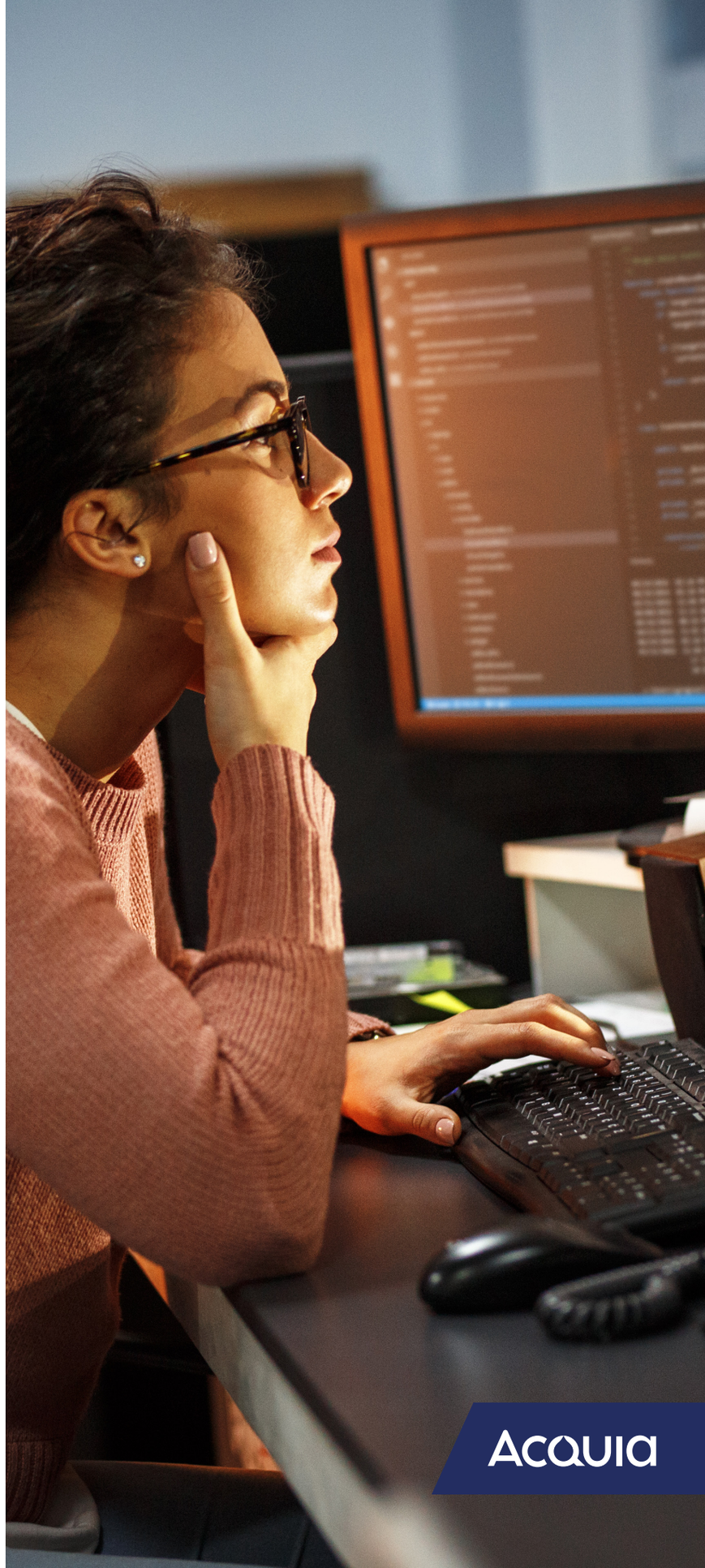
This is where Acquia Lift can play a part. Lift is personalization software that empowers marketers to deliver the compelling digital experiences that today's customers and prospects demand.

And if you're already using Drupal to build and maintain your website, we have good news for you! Chances are you already believe in the power of open source and you know that fundamental within Drupal is an amazing taxonomy function for classifying website content. Lift is able to leverage that taxonomy like no other personalization solution could.

This makes it far easier to categorize and segment content, saving metadata that makes it easier for classification and personalization purposes.

Every time Lift watches a customer view a piece of content, it stores that information with the content – and, in doing so, it is attributing that metadata on that content to that customer's profile.

For example, if a customer is browsing a site for cars and she keeps viewing Mazdas, Lift could note that she has viewed 10 cars with the taxonomy type of Mazda and then decide to show her more Mazdas. In this way, Lift is capitalizing on the metadata classification capability that is built into Drupal so that she will see even more of what she wants.



What's more, this capability is inherently flexible and customizable, so the marketing team can design and tweak it as needed to suit personalization objectives. For example, they can add custom HTML/CSS, log custom event analytics, or control who is able to do what within the system.

Acquia Lift also helps you make sure that your company is following best practices when it comes to personalization. Pages should load faster – without the dreaded "flash of general content." And, once you've gained a direct connection to the data via API integration, you can share it with your analytics team or your data scientists. From there, they can discover all kinds of insights that your marketing team might not be able to uncover on their own, unlocking further opportunities to create a compelling and truly exceptional CX.

Lift is a powerful tool for personalizing your Drupal website, but its benefits don't end there. Once you've created a small or simple personalization to start with, Lift can highlight ways in which you can achieve even more sophisticated and advanced personalization goals.



As you steadily become better at personalization, you'll achieve an even more impressive ROI along the way.

BENEFITS FOR MARKETERS

Acquia Lift collects a wide range of customer data across multiple channels, generating a single view of the customer and allowing marketers to gain far deeper insight into their unique tastes and behaviors than ever before.

Equipped with this insight, marketers can then easily and quickly define customer segments, making sure that they are served precisely the content they prefer – no matter where, when or how they are engaging with your company. This way, come decision time, your company will be at the top of their list for consideration.

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EXPAND AND MAGNIFY AWARENESS

To be fair, your marketing team has done other work to attract the right prospects to your site. Though Lift may not be directly involved in helping you attract these folks, critical groundwork has already been laid here before they arrive.

Your website's taxonomy has a powerful influence on your CX. Properly classifying content can help customers quickly discover the content they seek and avail themselves of self-service features. And, as it so happens, Drupal's native taxonomy offers your marketing colleagues a powerful way to classify the content on your site, automatically setting the stage for powerful personalization.

Since Acquia Lift is built for Drupal, it can collect far richer data and make it much easier for the marketing team to create content that's essentially personalization-ready. Whether offering website visitors personalized content recommendations or gaining sophisticated real-time insight into audience preferences, the marketing team can accomplish its goals far more quickly and efficiently thanks to Lift's integration with Drupal.

Even better, Lift doesn't require users to wrangle with code. This means marketers don't need great technical skills to apply personalization. It's as simple as point, click, personalize.

COLLECT AND ACTIVATE CUSTOMER DATA TO CONTINUALLY ENHANCE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

So, let's assume a prospect has visited your website. Here's where some important aspects of Acquia Lift come into play.

Lift collects data about your visitors – not just what device they're on and where they are, but activity data and behavioral information as well.

As Lift collects this data, it assembles and stores a dynamic, unified profile for a single, comprehensive view of each visitor's historical and real-time activity across channels. Marketers can then create segments based on numerous criteria to better understand your visitors and more effectively target them.

Meanwhile, these prospects are comparing your product or service to other solutions in the market. Since Lift is helping to automatically present the information your visitor sees as valuable, your chances of maintaining engagement improve.

Lift helps move them through the engagement funnel rather than burdening them with the task of finding content or answers on their own. You can also schedule personalizations, setting them to go live across different time zones so that your global audience is engaged at any hour of the day or night. With mixed campaigns, you can even personalize key pages on your site for different personas.

Analytics insights can highlight even more effective and tailored personalization strategies.

Most marketers should be able to get the reporting they need directly from the tool without the expertise of a data scientist, but those who have the option to call on those services are in an especially advantageous position to unlock the analytics insights they require.

SIMPLIFY THE CUSTOMER'S DECISION

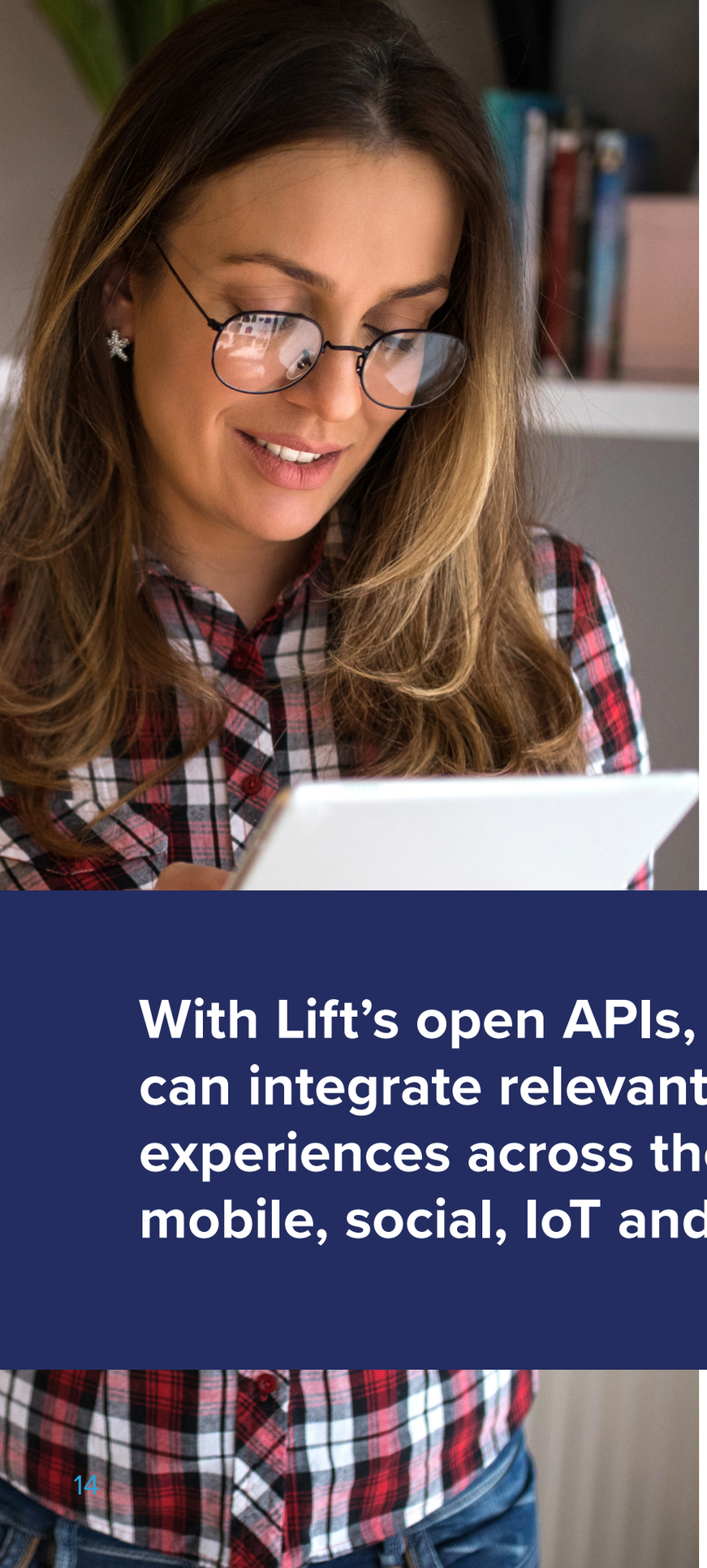
Lift continues to have an impact on your prospective customer even at decision time.

At this point, they are ready to select the best choice from among their options and make a purchase. Very likely, the brands that have provided them with the most useful information and most compelling experience will be at the top of this list. That's where you want to be, and the functions that Lift carries out have helped put you there.

Lift has made this all possible by providing your teams with a centralized view of all content across the organization.

This way, your marketers can streamline content selection, publishing and syndication to deliver the most relevant content experience to visitors across web, mobile, commerce and other touchpoints. And your business, now empowered to provide the personalized experiences that customers expect, can also maximize the ROI from its content investments.





BOOST CUSTOMER RETENTION

Once your customer decides to make a purchase, your goal is to retain them. Here, too, Lift can help you achieve the results you seek through sophisticated, context-aware personalization on the website, which is the centerpiece of the digital experience for many organizations.

You also gain more power and flexibility over the way your content is presented, optimizing its performance as desired. Along the way, you'll get to know your customers better – and, as you do, you'll be better equipped to recommend interesting content to them.

While all of these advantages will of course help you create an exceptional CX that cultivates long-term customer loyalty, they will also help you decrease your bounce rate and improve your overall website metrics.

With Lift's open APIs, your marketers can integrate relevant, personalized experiences across the web, email, mobile, social, IoT and other channels.



PROMOTE LOYALTY AND ADVOCACY

When your customer is truly satisfied with the CX you've given them, you can bet they will be back – and that they will also tell their friends all about the exceptional experience you provided them. Loyal customers can serve as powerful advocates for your brand, helping you broaden your reach with your desired audience.

Lift can also help you encourage precisely this kind of loyalty and advocacy, as well. Lift's powerful analytics engine comes complete with a series of pre-built and custom reports and dashboards. These help marketers gain insights to better understand their audiences and achieve their personalization objectives. With the benefit of these insights, marketers can continually improve the CX they offer and strengthen their competitive position even further.



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HOW TO BRING IT DEVELOPERS AND MARKETERS TOGETHER

Acquia Lift helps your business navigate the process of personalization, acting like a guide between IT and marketers.

This allows marketers to be creative and optimize experiences while aligning everything to all the approved content that your web and development teams create. The taxonomy is already there for you, waiting within Drupal, and the tools are made to work with each other.

Lift gives IT developers and marketers a real reason to collaboratively brainstorm ideas and work together to create a compelling digital experience for customers.

The prospect of upgrading the CX capabilities on your website is no longer a far off dream.

Now it's a practical reality that's much easier to achieve than you might have previously thought.





PAIRING YOUR WEBSITE WITH ACQUIA LIFT OPENS A WHOLE NEW WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES

With the right tools and a powerful partnership with marketing in place, IT developers can now expand their horizons and take on even more ambitious projects. Rather than worrying about resource constraints or potential internal conflicts, they can simply ask, “What’s the next goal we want to accomplish?”

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SUMMARY AND TAKEAWAYS

Drupal users have many third-party options for creating personalized digital experiences, but Acquia Lift is the only personalization tool that is optimized for Drupal.

With Lift, you can leverage the power of Drupal to create truly targeted, contextual experiences. Workflows can be streamlined and optimized, accelerating your time to value.

Lift doesn't require users to wrangle with complicated code, either. This means marketers don't need advanced technical skills to apply personalization. It's as simple as point, click, personalize. With a gentle learning curve and built-in access to analytics insights, marketing professionals can instead apply their expertise to what matters most – innovating the customer experience.

Ultimately, unlike many optimization and personalization solutions, Lift enables IT developers and marketers to work well with one another. And the things they accomplish together should better position your business to earn increased loyalty, revenue and growth.



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ACQUIA LIFT

Acquia Lift is an integral component of the Acquia Platform, and seamlessly integrates with Mautic for multichannel campaign automation and management, Acquia Journey for customer journey orchestration, Drupal for web content management and Acquia DAM for digital asset management.

To see how Acquia Lift can help you drive more personalized relationships with your customers, please visit acquia.com/lift or contact us directly at 888.922.7842 or sales@acquia.com to learn more or see a demo.

ABOUT ACQUIA

Acquia is the open source digital experience company. We provide the world's most ambitious brands with technology that allows them to embrace innovation and create customer moments that matter. At Acquia, we believe in the power of community — giving our customers the freedom to build tomorrow on their terms.

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