AI, Trust & Customer Data:
The Marketing Imperative

Smart Marketing Journeys with AI

In today's AI-fueled digital transformation, customer expectations have never been higher. People demand personalized, relevant, and seamless experiences across every touchpoint, from emails to digital ads to customer service. For marketers, this deeper shift into customer-centricity presents an opportunity to stand out as a trusted partner.

Generative AI (GenAI) is now embedded in marketing strategies and the responsibility for managing customer data has grown exponentially. Once considered the domain of IT departments, data governance now directly intersects with the goals of marketing, making Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs), Marketing Vice Presidents (VPs), and their teams critical stewards of shared customer data.

With this new responsibility comes a new goal: build trust, ensure data integrity, and use that data to create smarter, more personalized marketing journeys.

According to IDC, 60%
of brands are already using customer data in their GenAI models.

Source: Future Enterprise Resiliency & Spending Survey Wave 2, IDC, February 2024

≡IDC
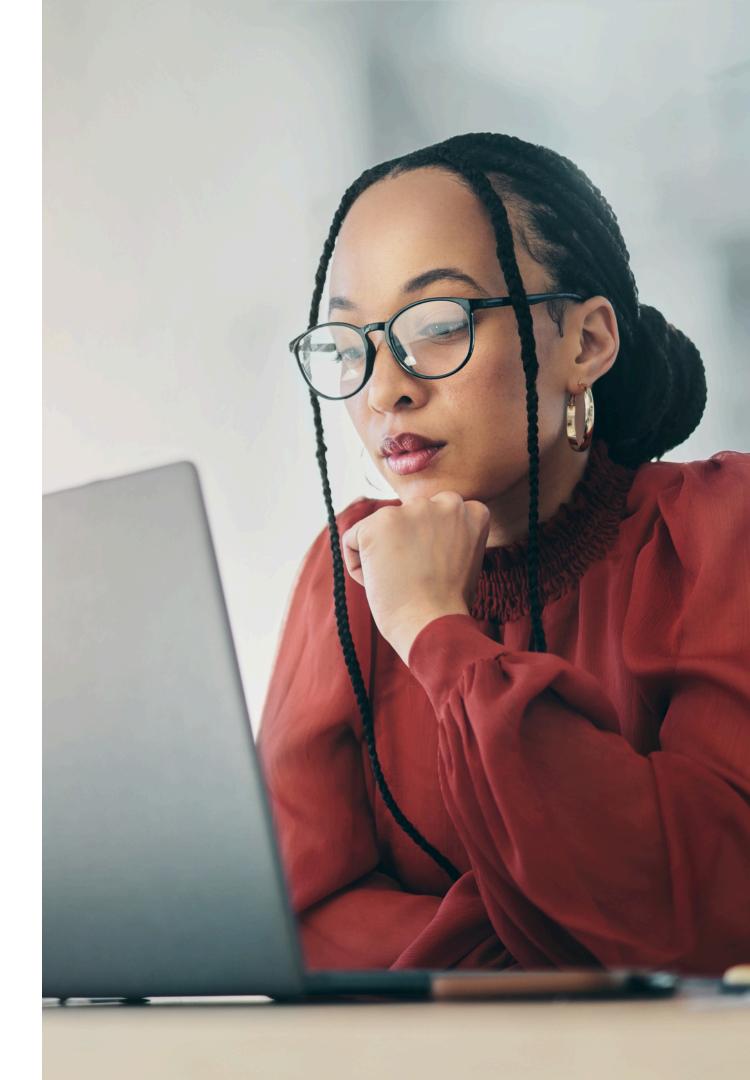
Trust is the Cornerstone of Marketing

Trust has always been at the heart of strong customer relationships, but now, it's critical.

Consumers are increasingly wary of how their personal data is used, and rightfully so. According to IDC, **customers are more likely to engage with brands that they trust with their data**. If you fail to demonstrate transparency and ethical data practices, they are quick to abandon you.

Data integrity must be maintained across all systems and touchpoints. Marketing is uniquely positioned to manage customer relationships and, by extension, customer data, but they can't do it alone. In a crucial effort to establish a reputation for trust, marketers must:

- Establish collaboration between other key players in the organization, like Chief Information Officers (CIOs) and Chief Data Officers (CDOs).
- Partner with IT teams to establish data management frameworks that spell out exactly how customer data is collected, stored, and used.
- Prioritize transparency, security, and compliance with solid data governance practices.

These are the first steps toward building trustworthy and personalized customer journeys that respect privacy while driving business value.

IDC

Protecting Data: Working Hand-in-Hand with Your CIO

Data is the core element of most marketing strategies. So, the relationship between marketing and IT is more important than ever. While marketing has always been responsible for driving customer-centric strategies, IT oversees the technology and systems that store and process customer data. Collaboration between these two teams is essential to guarantee that customer data is managed efficiently, securely, and in a way that benefits both the organization and the customer.

Together, marketing and IT must:

- Establish clear data governance policies.
- Implement secure data usage practices.
- Ensure that all systems are aligned with the company's broader business objectives.

A strong partnership helps ensure that marketing initiatives are powered by data that is accurate, consistent, and ethically sourced. It also lays the groundwork for the application of AI tools, which rely on clean, well-governed data to make informed decisions.

Respect Your Customers Privacy

Customers are the ultimate reason for all marketing efforts, and their needs and preferences should drive every decision made by marketing leaders and their teams. If customers don't feel their data is safe, they won't interact.

Data management must be transparent.

Marketers must become the guardians of customer data. Implementing effective privacy policies and consent management systems and offering easy-to-use opt-out choices help customers feel confident that their data is being handled responsibly.
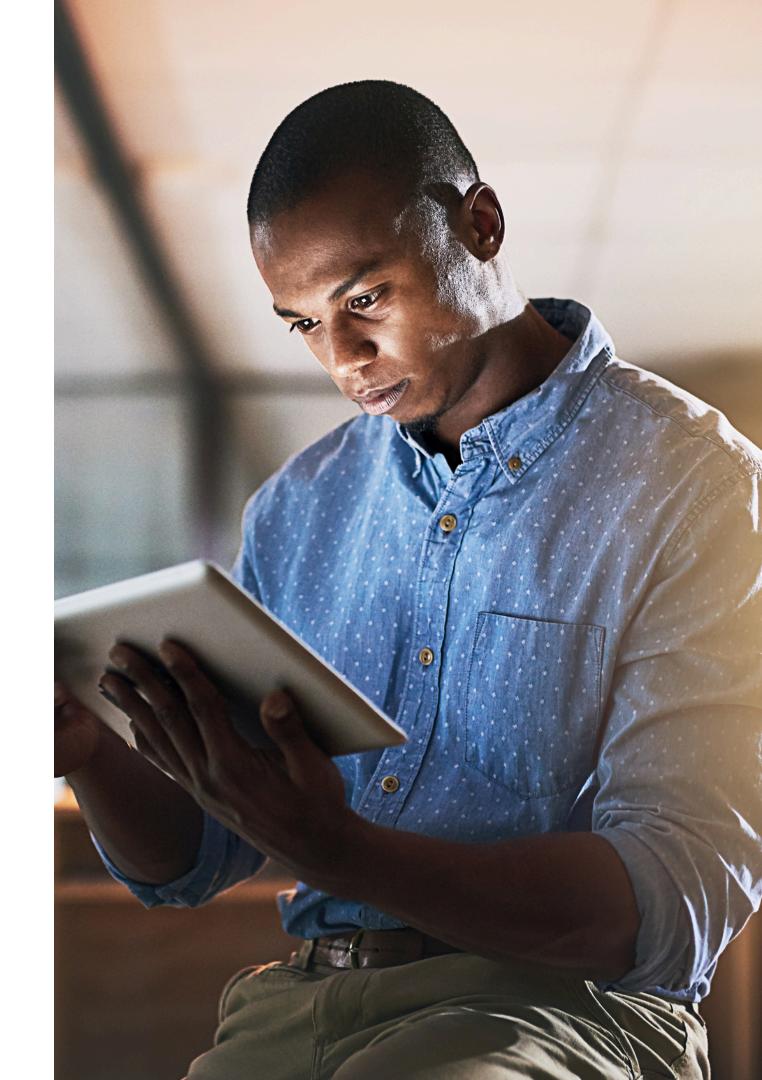
Data fuels marketing engines. So, defining and upholding a customer-centric approach is critical. But it's more than just gathering customer information — it demands ethical data usage and a universal respect for privacy.

> ## By 2026,
> **if marketers fail to implement digital trust practices for AI/GenAI transparency and ethical data handling, they risk losing over 79% of customer loyalty and damaging their brand reputation**
>
> *IDC FutureScape: Worldwide Chief Marketing Officer 2025 Predictions*

IDC

Enhance the Customer Experience with AI

Data should be used not only to improve marketing efforts but also to enhance the customer experience. Whether it's by using AI-powered tools to create personalized recommendations, improving service delivery, or addressing individual customer pain points, every interaction should be focused on creating value for the customer while respecting their privacy.

AI tools can help marketers design customer-centric journeys by analyzing data and predicting customer preferences. **Transparent data management processes will ensure that AI tools are being used responsibly.**

69% of B2B buyers
say their decision on whether to read something is influenced by whether it's personalized.

IDC 2024 B2B Technology Buyer Survey

IDC

AI: The Intersection Between Data Governance and Marketing

AI tools have revolutionized marketing. From AI-powered content creation to predictive analytics, marketers now have access to sophisticated tech that can enhance every aspect of go-to-market (GTM) strategies.

But, with great power comes great responsibility. These tools rely heavily on data — data that must be accurate, clean, and governed properly to respect customer preferences and yield meaningful results. Bad data doesn't just lead to poor marketing decisions; it can also damage a brand's reputation and erode trust.

Clean, reliable data forms the foundation of transparent, accountable marketing practices that nurture strong, lasting relationships with customers. Without this foundational layer of trust, even the most sophisticated AI tools will be powerless. In fact, they may well do more harm than good.

> **Marketing's role in data governance is to balance the need for personalization with the responsibility of ethical data usage.**

≋IDC

Seize the AI-Powered Opportunity to Build on Your Trust Foundation

Your role as a CMO or VP of Marketing has always been about understanding customers, crafting compelling narratives, and driving business growth. However, in today's AI-driven world, you must also become the steward of customer data. It's up to you to ensure data governance is at the center of all your marketing efforts. By working closely with IT and other stakeholders, you can create data-driven, customer-centric journeys that build trust, deliver value, and ensure your brand remains competitive in a rapidly changing market.

You have the unique opportunity to shape not only the customer experience but also the ethical framework that governs how that experience is delivered. **Clean data, effective governance, and a commitment to personalization are key to success.** If you can harness the power of data to create smarter, more meaningful connections with customers, you'll succeed as a marketer and a true steward of customer trust.

Interested in creating more personalized marketing journeys?

Learn more about how to capitalize on the AI tech shift by reading IDC's new blog: "[AI Alone Won't Drive Revenue – What Are You Missing?](#)".

For an analyst perspective on how marketers are on the forefront of the AI tech shift, read our research, "[IDC FutureScape: Worldwide Chief Marketing Officer 2025 Predictions](#)", November 2024, Doc # US48537222.

Ready to elevate your messaging through smart marketing journeys with IDC as your trusted partner?

Connect with us

≋IDC

About Us

International Data Corporation (IDC) is the premier global provider of market intelligence, advisory services, and events for the information technology, telecommunications, and consumer technology markets. IDC helps IT professionals, business executives, and the investment community make fact-based decisions on technology purchases and business strategy. More than 1,300 IDC analysts provide global, regional, and local expertise on technology and industry opportunities and trends in over 110 countries worldwide. For 60 years, IDC has provided strategic insights to help our clients achieve their key business objectives. IDC is a subsidiary of IDG, the world's leading technology media, research, and events company.

Global Headquarters

140 Kendrick Street
Building B
Needham, MA 02494
USA
508.872.8200