

The background of the entire page is a night sky filled with stars, with the Milky Way galaxy visible. In the lower portion of the image, there is a range of rugged, snow-capped mountains illuminated by a warm, golden light, likely from a low sun or moon.

bunting™

Personalization 101: 4 Tests to Get You a Quick, Reliable Revenue Uplift.

Where to begin

What are the first steps when planning a personalization campaign?

Tests to Try

Actionable tips for an easy conversion rate uplift

An Exciting New Era



There is a shift taking place in e-commerce, and it's a big one.

Until recently, the world of online retailing had largely been a cold and often impersonal place. Visiting an ecommerce store was a similar experience for everyone. Regardless of who you might be, the content of the website appeared the same.

This is largely why we found the inevitable move to online shopping meant losing the personal touch of the bricks-and-mortar store.

Until now.

Website personalization is changing the world of e-commerce as we know it. It's predicted that 90% of marketers will be using it in the next 12 months, and 94% of businesses agree that it is critical to future success (source: eConsultancy).

Visitors landed on your site now expect a personalized experience. 74% of online consumers feel 'frustrated' when they encounter website content that doesn't match their interests.

And the indisputable truth, is that personalization leads to happier, engaged customers who buy more and busier ecommerce stores that sell more. eConsultancy found that stores using personalization quantified a 19% increase in conversions.

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So what exactly is Personalization?

In a nutshell, personalization is serving up the right content, to the right visitor, at the right time.

The entire content of your website - recommendations, banners, pop-ups, images, ads, text, resources, messages - can and should be personalized to each visitor based on their real-time wants and needs.

To do this well, you need to exploit the plethora of

data at your fingertips to truly understand the uniqueness of each visitor - and then adapting your website in real time.

It requires looking at demographic data like gender and location, but also device, browsing and buying patterns, on site behaviour and intent. And in order for personalization to be effective you need to know what a user wants and needs at each and every moment.

The Process

1. Define your visitor personas

Who is your audience? Are they mostly men or women? Do they mostly shop on mobiles or desktops? Are they national or international?

By getting the most accurate picture possible of who your audience is, you can start to plan your personalization efforts in a more accurate way. And of course, there may be multiple personas - use the data available to you to determine who these personas are, and use them as the basis of your planning.

3. Segment and 4. Present

It's time to look very closely at the data you've collected (consider a tool like Bunting to get the necessary data here). Based on your buyer personas, you can already start to make some segments based on a demographic data such as gender and geolocation. However, this in itself is not enough. You should then look at behavioural and transactional data, and use this to segment more meaningfully.

2. Map your buyer journey

Define the steps that need to be taken to convert, be that buying a product or signing a newsletter - whatever your conversion goal may be.

By understanding this process from start to finish, you can plan what personalized content to use to guide the visitor from one stage to the next. Getting in your customers' shoes and understanding their intent at each point of their journey will always aid the process of personalizing content at each stage.

Consider segmenting people according to whether they are a new or returning visitor, on whether they have converted or not. Or, based on their brand preferences or total number of page views. You can then use these segments to target people in different ways.

Once you have your targeting in place using a personalization tool, simply display content that suits that segment, and measure the impact with a split test.

Of course, it helps to have a few ideas to get you started, which is why we've included 4 types of test to try for a quick conversion.

1. Personalized Offers

Offers are a classic way to raise conversions. But they shouldn't be handed out to everyone - undermining your profit margins is never a good idea. Offers, like all important aspects of your site, should be personalized. Here are some ways you can personalize your offers to maximise their effectiveness.

Visits vs Conversions

Looking at your data will allow you to identify opportunities.

Do you have high levels of indecisive shoppers? These can be classed as visitors who have visited your site, say, 5 or more times, but never purchased. This segment may be susceptible to a nudging little discount to make that first purchase.

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Relevancy

The content of the offer can be tailored to an individual's preferences. Choose a category or type of product that the visitor has shown an interest in. Perhaps if a visitor has viewed 'X' product. Or, they have used your site's own search engine and entered a specific keyword.

By making offers relevant, you significantly heighten your chances of conversion.

For VIPs

Your return customers will bring most of your revenue. Rewarding them for their loyalty benefits you and them. Delight your big return spenders with offers on the products they love.

Visitors from PPC

Your ad clickers are an expensive segment of traffic, and they are engaged. These people make a better target for your best offers.

2. Popups

Pop-ups have a reputation of belonging to the early-2000s era of annoying internet features (along with the dial up screeching sound, and perpetual video buffering). But pop-ups are still a great way to grab your visitor's attention and promote something they'll love.

The point here, though, is to show them something they want to see. Offer something they don't, and at best you risk disengaging them. At worst you can actually upset them - after all; no one wants to see an offer that doesn't apply to them!

The only way to truly know is to split test, and see how the pop-up impacts engagement. But in our experience, pop-ups done correctly can be a great way to engage shoppers and increase conversions.

Here are some ways to use personalized pop-ups

Pop-ups done correctly can be a great way to engage shoppers and increase conversions

Prevent exits from first time visitors

A visitor's cursor heading to exit your website can signal the last time you ever see them.

Tools like Bunting know when your visitors are about to leave - and can do something about it. A pop up here can work wonders. There are myriad reasons why someone may be leaving your site without buying; distraction and indecisiveness being common. Try an 'email me my cart' message to shoppers leaving items in their cart- you'll be surprised at the number of visitors who happily give their email addresses in return for a reminder.

Grow subscribers

For frequent shoppers browsing your site, a pop-up asking to join their mailing list may be something they'd be interested in. But be careful here - is a new visitor who has never purchased before likely to want this? If anything, this is likely to annoy this group. Test this pop-up with visitors who have purchased before, excluding the rest.

Cross Sells

When a visitor adds an item to their cart you can trigger a pop-up showing items that are statistically likely to be bought with in conjunction with the item in the cart. This kind of pop up can really help visitors to find items that complement their chosen product and it helps raise average order value as a natural consequence.

3. Personalized Messaging

Every single piece of text on your website should be relevant to your visitor. It should help them in some way. Your text is your chance to help guide visitors along the sales funnel presenting the information they need, at the right time.

If irrelevant messaging is taking up that all important website real estate, then you're asking for trouble. And yet, I frequently land on websites that contain messaging completely irrelevant to my needs. Whether it's free shipping notification targeted at a different country, or a first time order discount when I'm a return customer.

On the next page you will find a few things to consider.

1. First time visitors

Is it their first time on your site? If so, greet them, assure them of your contact details and an available FAQ if they need it.

This is the online equivalent of a bricks and mortar shopkeeper greeting their customers with a friendly smile. And it can easily be done with a non-intrusive pop-up or header.

2. Account holders

It should also seem obvious that your account holders (if this is relevant to your store) should see different messaging to those without an account.

In fact, research has shown that information directed at account holders can put off those without one (and who don't want one!).

3. International visitors

A lack of trust is the biggest barrier to buying. For these visitors, there's no quicker and easier way of instilling trust than assurance that you support and ship to their region. If your visitor is in France, for example, then clearly display your custom and shipping policy for France. Add a flag of their country on the homepage to add additional trust, and show them your international phone number in case they need support.

4. Personalized Banners

Your website shouldn't be all about you. It should be a reflection of what your customer want, and it should engage your visitors from the moment they arrive.

Given that your homepage banner is the most valuable piece of real-estate on your website, this is the best place to start.

Making your homepage relevant to each visitor means a better experience for them, which will

translate into more conversions for you. Knowing what your customers are interested in means you can make your website offering truly irresistible.

By analysing what keywords are driving traffic to your site, you can make your banners relevant to your customers' interests.

Use vivid banners that are relevant to your shoppers' interests and you'll see a big rise in engagement. Display products and sales related to what your shoppers want, and make your store feel like home.

What you should do now

If you are serious about raising your conversion rate and reducing unnecessary loss then you should download our amazingly useful [free guide](#).

If you'd like us to dramatically improve your website, visit our [website](#) and then [contact us](#) for more information.

About author Stephen Tucker

Stephen Tucker is CEO and chief data scientist at website personalization tool [Bunting](#), and is cited as a leader in the field of website personalization and product recommendations.

He has been featured in [Forbes](#), [Smart Insights](#), [Venturebeat](#) and [Practical Ecommerce](#), and regularly speaks at E-commerce conferences around the world.

