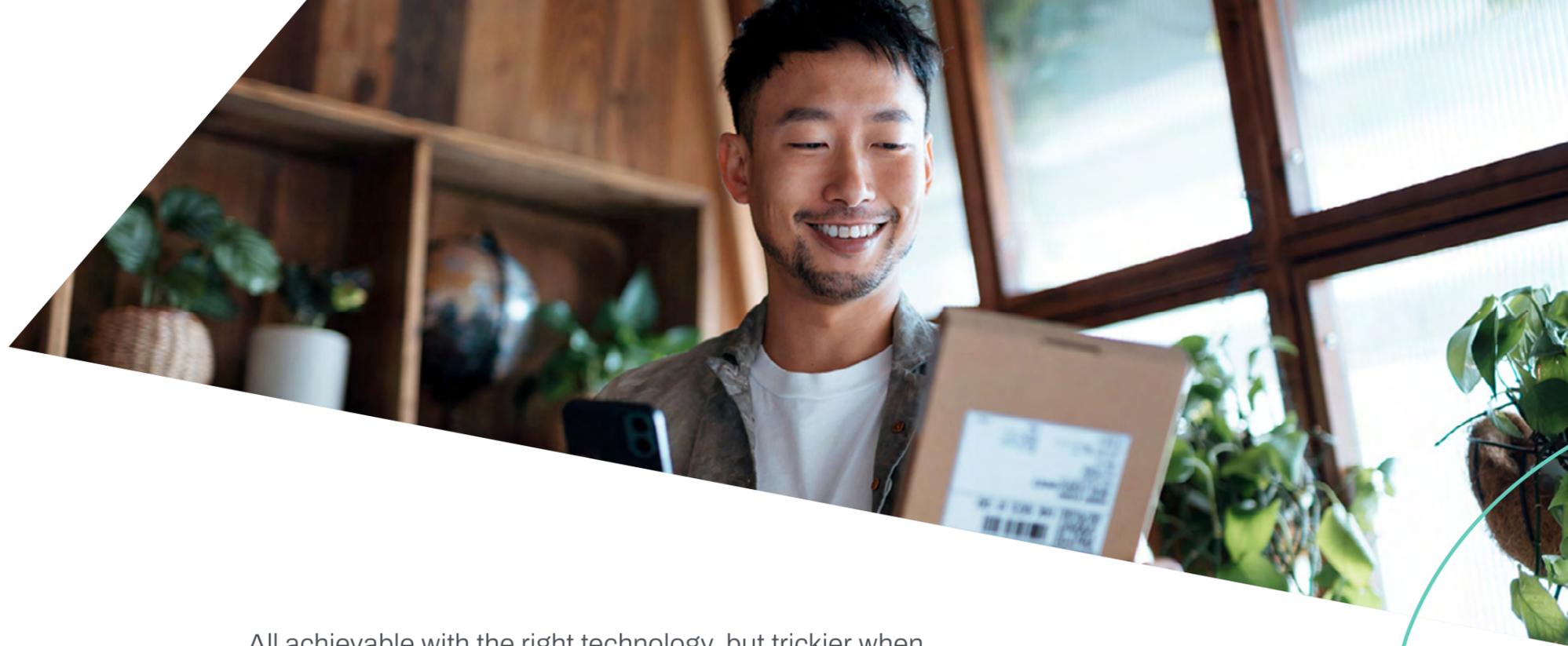




THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO

Zero-Party Data





Consumer trust is hard to earn and all too easy to lose.

For several years now, headlines have been awash with news of data scandals, huge fines being doled out to tech behemoths, and consumers having their personal data used in clandestine ways. At the lighter end of the scale, this data has been harvested to deliver unwanted and scattergun product targeting; at the more illicit, to influence elections. Throw in a raft of global privacy legislation along with data depreciation due to the tech giants getting serious about limiting cookie and ad tracking, and it's clear marketers need to change tact.

The erosion of consumer trust has meant it has never been more important for marketers to build honest, one-to-one relationships with consumers. In spite of this, the modern consumer still displays a necessity for true individualization, tailor-made product recommendations and bespoke loyalty rewards.

All achievable with the right technology, but trickier when contrasted with consumer expectation for heightened privacy, strict data controls and personalization derived exclusively from information they have proactively and explicitly shared with a chosen brand. The solution is zero-party data.

This paper will show rather than merely tell, taking you through the privacy landscape, the four types of consumer data and how zero-party data is the foundational layer of relationship marketing. We will look at successful stories from leading brands that are leveraging interactive experiences and next-gen loyalty programs to learn more about their customers and deliver better personalization across the entire customer lifecycle.

Welcome to the *Complete Guide to Zero-Party Data*.

A Quick History of Privacy Scandals and Legislation

IT'S BEEN A TUMULTUOUS FEW YEARS WHEN IT COMES TO THE PRIVACY LANDSCAPE.

The Cambridge Analytica scandal set off a chain of events that has irretrievably changed the marketing and advertising landscape with privacy legislation becoming the rule, rather than the exception. The increased digitization of our societies has made individuals realize over the years that data protection concerns all of us. In fact, there's even a dedicated "Data Protection Day" celebrated each year on January 28 (one for your calendars). It's not just the GDPR in Europe — over 120 countries have privacy legislation for consumers of some sort, and state-level protections are sweeping across the U.S.

Confounding matters, Apple launched Mail Privacy Protection (MMP), hiding users' IP addresses, so senders couldn't link it to other online activity or determine their locations. It also made it more difficult for email marketers to track open rates.

For marketers that have relied on third-party data sets and cookie tracking to power their customer engagement initiatives, this time of digital disruption is quite the headache. However, for those marketers committed to forging honest, meaningful relationships, and thinking about the values of their customers and how they can align with them, the rewards are limitless.

61%

of consumers think ads derived from cookie tracking are creepy.

34%

of consumers have tightened privacy settings across their online accounts.

Timeline of Events

MARCH 2018

The Cambridge Analytica scandal is exposed, revealing the personal data of 87 million people had been surreptitiously harvested by the agency.

JANUARY 2020

California becomes the first state in the U.S. to enact GDPR-style privacy legislation via the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA).

APRIL 2021

Changes to Apple's IDFA means users choose whether to opt in or out of app tracking.

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023

Four more states in the U.S. formally enact privacy legislation, with 13 more scheduled to do so from 2024 to 2026.

MAY 2018

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), a data protection and privacy law, goes into effect for citizens of the EU and EEA.

MARCH 2020

Apple completely blocks third-party tracking cookies on Safari.

SEPTEMBER 2021

Apple Mail Privacy Protection (MPP) launches, allowing users to easily hide their IP addresses from ESPs and the brands sending emails to Apple device users.

JULY 2024

Google announces plan to give consumers the choice to opt-in or out of third-party cookies.

Understanding the 4 Data Types

Not all data types are created equally. To understand why third-party data is so problematic (and on the way out), you must first understand the difference between third-, first-, and zero-party data. The method of data collection can also include inferred, observed, and self-reported data.

FIRST-PARTY DATA

This is data that's collected directly from the customer, typically during sales or form completion, and can include things like past purchases, mailing address, product preferences and date of birth. First-party data is traditionally gathered using tracking pixels, cookies, and transactions, and since it comes directly from the source, provides valuable insights about how a customer interacts with your brand and how their behaviors change over time.

However, first-party data has its limitations. Interests and future purchasing intentions are still inferred from what your customer has done in the past and can't tell anything about what they intend to do in the future — it's implicit data rather than explicit.

SECOND-PARTY DATA

Second-party data is essentially another organization's first-party data. Second-party data is shared and not sold between two trusted companies, and then blended with first-party data to target known and unknown audiences. With a spotlight on how brands gather and use consumer data, data being shared between companies sounds quite murky.

Second-party data may offer mutually benevolent relationships for brands and advertisers, but offers little added value to the consumer.

THIRD-PARTY DATA

Third-party data is collected and compiled by outside vendors, and typically purchased or licensed by a brand. It can include any number of personal or anonymized data points, including information on demographics and online activity that can provide inferences about a consumer's interests and preferences. Third-party data holds some degree of value for marketers, but it carries significant risk.

As this data is aggregated from a variety of sources, it's impossible to know the origin or accuracy of a given data point. Information is often stale or even contradictory — so campaign personalization based on third-party data can lead to a disjointed or even unpleasant customer experience.

Privacy legislation coupled with privacy pivots from the walled gardens mean its use is almost obsolete, and since anyone can buy access to third-party data, it doesn't provide any competitive advantage for a brand.

ZERO-PARTY DATA

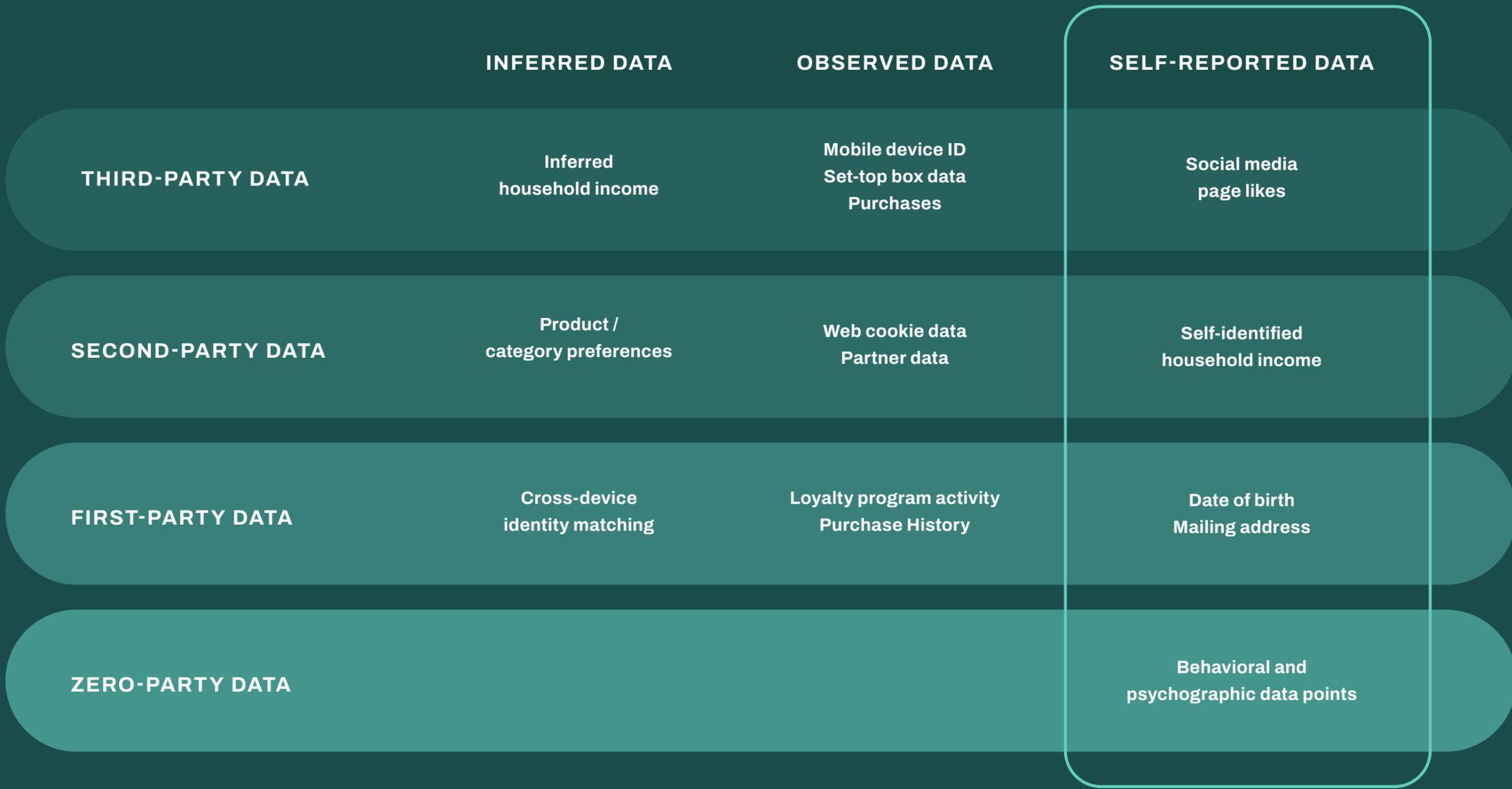
It is possible for marketers to gather the behavioral and psychographic data required, not just to know what your customers have done in the past, but what they intend to do in the future. This is zero-party data, and it is the future of relationship marketing across the entire customer lifecycle, from acquisition to retention and loyalty.

Marketers collect this class of data by connecting directly with consumers, and rather than making inferences and assumptions, they simply ask. If a customer trusts your brand and values the interactions they have, they will proactively and intentionally share. The data, insights and permissions they provide can then be used to power personalized marketing.

Quite simply, zero-party data allows brands to build direct relationships with consumers, and in turn, better personalize their marketing efforts, services, offers and product recommendations. As it comes directly and willingly from the consumer, there are no intermediaries or guesswork.

“Zero-party data is that which a customer intentionally and proactively shares with a brand. It can include preference center data, purchase intentions, personal context and how the individual wants the brand to recognize them.”

- Forrester



Zero-Party Data: Transcends the Privacy Street Fight Your Brand Can't Control

Privacy legislation and related regulations are not merely a headwind marketers need to face, it's a full-blown tornado. It's attacking from all sides. GDPR and other umbrella regulations were enough of a challenge for a brand's compliance team to manage, but the amount of state level legislation in the U.S. alone has sometimes had crippling impacts on the way a brand can operate. It's costly, takes human resources to navigate and seems to change constantly.

Couple this with the fact that brands want to use their customer data within walled gardens, where the cost of advertising and reaching your audience is ever-increasing. Algorithms never seem to shift in the favor of brand marketers, and reach diminishes while costs rise month over month.

Both the legislators and CEOs of these giant media and tech behemoths are duking it out in the streets, as well as in the homes of their customers via splashy TV spots, while the consumer and brand are getting dragged off of the sidelines and right into the melee. The consumers want a better connection and experience with the brands they love (and need), and brands are looking to deliver. But neither have control over the way in which privacy will be governed in the future.

Zero-party data, however, transcends this riot in the streets for both parties by connecting the consumer, and the data they control, directly to the brands they trust. When collected properly, including a clear and explicit opt-in, brands now have the right to engage the consumer directly to enhance the experience and start growing that relationship. Privacy legislation is meant to protect the consumer from the nefarious bartering, brokering and use of their data, but forward thinking brands are collecting these explicit "contracts" with consumers on a one-to-one level.

Of course, the consumer can rescind the use of their data at any time, but when consent is given, brands can now BYOD (bring your own data) to the walled gardens to make a match and deliver their message to the right person. Even better, brands can use owned channels like email, SMS, in-app, or on-website messaging channels to avoid costly CPMs or algorithms that suppress that outreach. The way in which you collect zero-party data matters and keeping record of that explicit contract is the key to keeping regulators off of your back.

88%

of consumers say their favorite brand uses their data in a way that makes them feel comfortable.

77%

of consumers find a brand's data privacy policies to be an "important" or "critically important" factor in maintaining their brand loyalty.

Zero-Party Data: The Foundational Layer of Relationship Marketing

Relationship marketing is the practice of growing long term relationships directly with consumers while understanding their true wants and needs to better deliver personalized products and services. To realize this, brands need to be powering personalization with the right class of data — zero-party data.

In a post-pandemic, privacy-era world, consumers have more digital interactions with businesses than ever before. As the number of devices (and interactions) continues to grow, the need for accurate and compliant zero-party data will only become more critical. Cookies are on their way out, and marketers who want to stay relevant are increasingly investing in a zero-party data approach to re-envision their marketing campaigns to leverage detailed data that's freely provided by customers rather than relying on cookies-driven targeting.

This philosophical change in how businesses think about their customers' data, enables both greater personalization and greater control for the end user, whilst engaging with customers from acquisition thorough to retention and loyalty.

Ultimately, zero-party data isn't just a new way to place targeted ads or email campaigns — it's about transforming how

companies engage with (and demonstrate respect for) their most valuable stakeholders: their customers. And, it isn't just for big brands, either — businesses of any size can benefit from collecting data directly from their customers and using it to build more meaningful relationships across the customer lifecycle.

Gathering zero-party data requires a thoughtful and strategic approach. Brands should strive to create personalized experiences that are easy, transparent, and of value to the consumer, making sure they understand how their data will be used and how sharing it benefits them.

78%

of consumers say they're likely to engage with personalized messages tailored to their interests.



Acquisition

Modern consumers are cognizant of the value of their personal and preference data and are not going to hand it over without receiving something of value in return — this is the value-exchange economy. Marketers can realize this through interactive experiences that conduct granular research, progressively profile, and accrue opt-ins.

Questionnaires, polls, quizzes, sweepstakes, QR codes at point-of-sale and social stories, to name a few, can incorporate reward mechanics that give consumers a genuine reason to engage and submit their first- and zero-party data. The idea of a value exchange is as old as civilization and omnipresent in life. Whether you're looking at it from the marketer's or the customer's perspective, it's simple: ask, receive, give, repeat. It's a match made in relationship marketing heaven.

It doesn't have to be an extravagant prize or discount, although these work and deliver an ROI. Consumers will share their personal, psychographic and behavioral data in return for unlocking content, personalized recommendations, to feel part of a brand's community, social kudos, and for early or exclusive access to products and services.

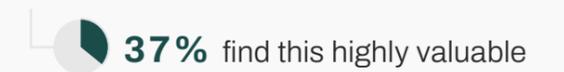
By leveraging the right mechanics, and offering a tempting value exchange, your customers will tell you what products they desire, what they look for in a service, and what motivates them to purchase.

Many brands have adopted this “give to get” approach and even shifted their advertising strategies from one that focuses on a click-to-buy call-to-action to one that favors a click-to-collect approach. A call-to-action in a display ad that screams “BUY NOW” may (or may not) result in a single, short term revenue sale, while advertising an experiential opportunity or value exchange can result in the collection of zero-party data that can be leveraged over the entire customer cycle.

Using advertising to promote a sweepstakes giveaway, for example, could allow brands to ask strategic questions about their audience's wants and needs and collect that psychographic zero-party data as part of the entry process. This allows the brand to then repeatedly email or SMS consumers with relevant offers and content that meet their lifestyles. And, 51% of consumers are tired of irrelevant content or offers, so asking what they need, listening to the answers and then personalizing your messaging.

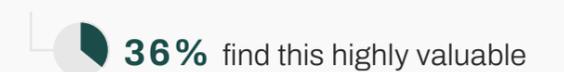
81%

of global consumers will trade personal and preference data in return for the opportunity to win a prize.



83%

of global consumers will trade personal and preference data in return for early or exclusive products and services.



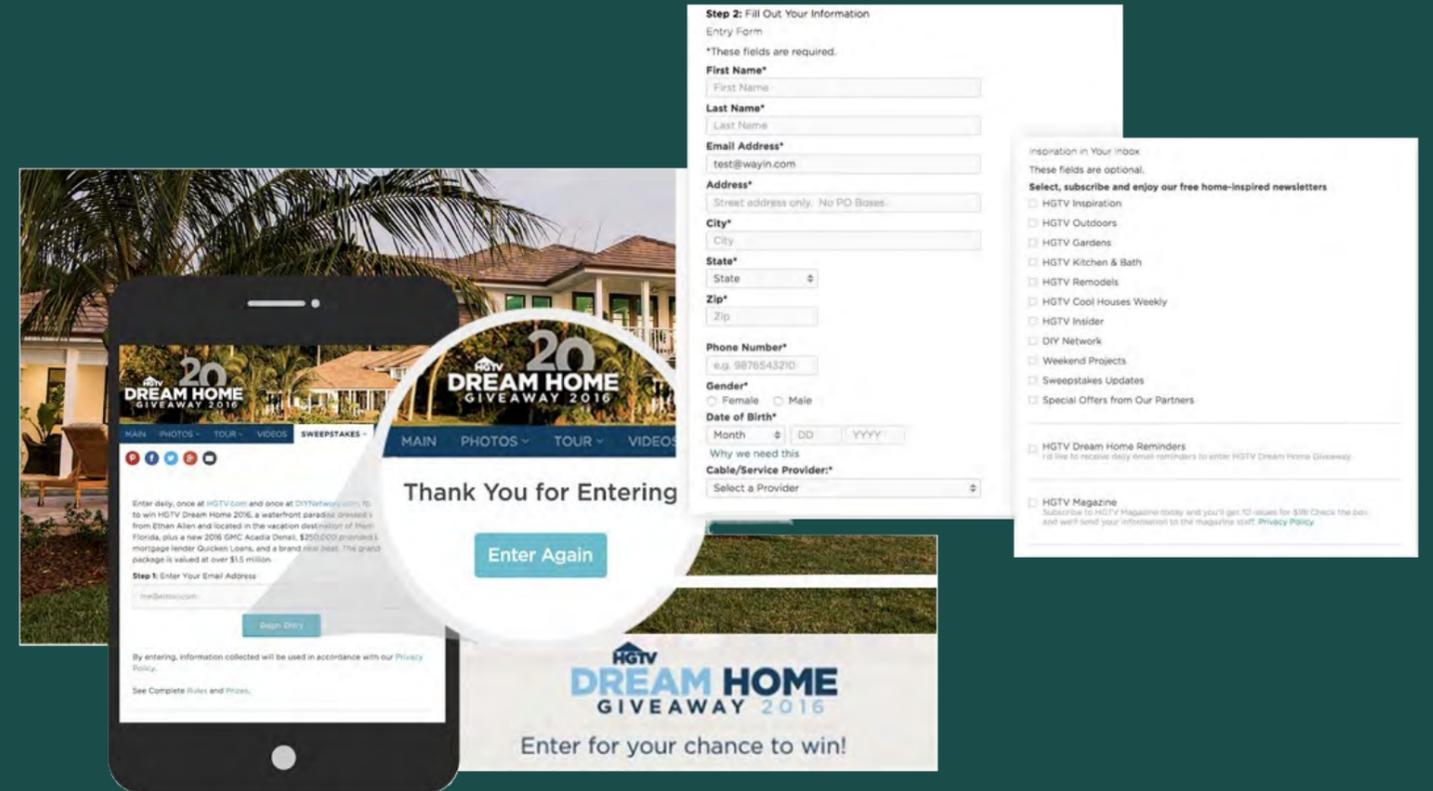
Discovery

YOU CAN COLLECT ZERO-PARTY DATA AT SCALE!

Discovery wanted to load its marketing database with first- and zero-party data ... and lots of it. With the red-letter prize of a fully-furnished waterfront home in Merritt Island, Florida, on offer, consumers were always going to enter en-masse.

On a dedicated microsite, participants were asked to submit a small amount of PII data in return for entry into the sweepstakes, as well as information that Discovery and its partners could monetize — things like what TV provider an entrant subscribed to, and whether or not they were a homeowner. Consumers could enter once per day, and each time they returned they would be asked different questions, allowing Discovery to progressively profile the entrant.

The results were staggering, with over 110 million unique entries, and over 2 billion individual behavioral data points gathered. Of course, most marketing departments don't have the resources available to give away a \$2.7 million house, but the concepts are true whatever your scale — offer an enticing value exchange and ask the right questions to learn more about your customers, and start owning those relationships.



110M

Unique entries

**GOLD
WINNER**

Internationalist
Innovation in
Media Awards

2BN

Zero-party data
points gathered

Engagement

With more consumer data available to marketers than ever before, there's little excuse for sending inconsequential offers, products that the consumer has no interest in, or even worse, messaging based on data that has been surreptitiously gathered without their consent. Even so, consumers remain pretty frustrated by the subpar attempts at personalized messages they receive from brands.

Brands need a communication frequency based on each customer's individual purchase cycle and profile attributes. This requires a cadence that is constantly refined by optimal delivery times; campaigns should be triggered based on online behavioral data and other real-time customer signals across your websites, apps and owned properties, including in-store actions.

Let the data tell you when it's time to send a message, in which channel, and what the content should be. Listening is as important as talking when building relationships and driving favored outcomes.

Truly personalized messaging is the core of relationship marketing, and not about short-term wins or sales but focused on delighting customers for the long haul. In order to reduce attrition and continue to grow, brands need to deliver personalized messaging that shows empathy and an understanding of an individual's likes, interests, history and preferences, while delivering in the moments that matter. This means collecting, understanding and activating more zero-party data throughout their entire engagement strategy.

51%

of consumers felt frustration when they received irrelevant content or offers.

41%

of consumers felt frustration from messaging that doesn't reflect their wants and needs.

35%

of consumers felt frustration when they received messaging based on information they hadn't shared directly with the brand.



Smartbox

A RE-ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY THAT DELIGHTS ITS AUDIENCE

As one of Europe’s most notable present-giving services, Smartbox had millions of contacts in their database, but with a business model rooted in gifting, half of those contacts were buyers, and the other half were the beneficiaries, who had never actually made a purchase from the brand. Smartbox required an engagement strategy to convert these dormant contacts (beneficiaries) into customers.

For each beneficiary, Smartbox would merely have an email address, the received gift and a small amount of PII data when the recipient redeemed their gift. Smartbox leveraged interactive experiences and all of the various engagement mechanics to pique the interest of beneficiaries and encourage them to share behavioral and psychographic data with the brand.

Through interactive experiences, Smartbox activated over 900,000 inactive contacts in its database, and by using the zero-party data it collected to deliver relevant offers and content, it saw huge boosts to revenue.

61%

uplift in revenue through zero-party data strategy.

60%

active audience grown by 60%.

[!\[\]\(173968034f6ca6c36e25dcb8a274badd_img.jpg\) Watch the Smartbox video](#)

Tailored Brands:

Men's Wearhouse

USING ZERO-PARTY DATA TO TURN ONE-OFF SHOPPERS INTO RETURNING CUSTOMERS

For nearly 50 years, Men's Wearhouse has been serving customers with high-quality, affordable designer apparel for all occasions. It boasts over 600 brick-and-mortar stores and is one of the largest specialty retailers for tuxedo rentals in the United States. Although a great market to be at the forefront of, it has its limitations, with the typical customer hiring a suit or tuxedo for a one-off special occasion — seldom making a transaction with the brand again.

To combat this, Men's Wearhouse deployed a post-rental interactive experience, where customers could share their individual style preferences. Things like professional or casual, slim or modern fit, single or double-breasted jacket, lapel type and budget, etc. Customers were then directed to specific products that fit their personal preferences where they could purchase online.

However the campaign was not merely limited to a virtual stylist. Suits are an expensive purchase, that for many require some consideration. Using customers' self-reported preferences, Men's Wearhouse emailed its customers their unique product selections, with a personalized subject line and preheader, nearest store to their location and individualized styling tips. This is a great story of re-engaging lost customers, audience building and converting.



Personalization

Although as marketers we should always be striving to deliver better personalization, it's crucial to recognize the line between what's cool and adds value to the consumer's life, and what's overly intrusive. It may be tempting to demonstrate how well you know your customers, but nobody wants to be unpleasantly surprised by marketing efforts.

But consumers do love personalization, as long as it's powered by zero-party data and not by snooping. 80% think recommendations based on past purchases are cool, 68% like an email reminder or advert about an abandoned shopping cart, and 84% think personalized birthday offers are cool.

The key to rising above the competition is to establish an intelligent messaging strategy that goes beyond "casting and blasting," or personalization that peaks at a first name in the subject line. To win, your messaging should offer products your customer has expressed an interest in, that fits their declared budget and contains dynamic content that uses keywords you know will elicit engagement from them.

The brands committed to fostering better relationships and adding relevance, value and personalization to their messaging are the ones that are elevated to preferred status and poised to see long-term benefit across the customer lifecycle.



of consumers felt frustration when they received messaging that didn't recognize their shopping or loyalty history.



American Airlines

ZERO-PARTY DATA + PERSONALIZATION ENGINE = INCREASED REVENUE

American Airlines is one of the world's largest airline carriers moving nearly 200 million passengers annually. Email is a huge driver of sales for the brand, and they looked to increase revenue per customer while adding a deeper level of personalization based on individual customer preferences.

The Marigold Strategic Services team developed a strategy to reach that goal. First, interactive experiences were deployed to collect zero-party data, including psychographic information about how, when and where customers would plan to fly — business or leisure, long or short haul, economy or first class, etc. Those insights put each customer on a unique email path that included hyper-personalized content and offers matching their needs.

American Airlines moved from a batch-and-blast email with a one-size-fits-all offer to delivering personalized, real-time offers based on known psychographic data declared directly from the customer. This led to increased open rates, a lift in engagement scores and ultimately a lift in revenue per customer.

WATCH NOW



[American Airlines: How Zero Party Data + Personalization Engine Increased Revenue](#)



84%

conversion rate for zero-party data gathering interactive experience.

50%+

open rate for zero-party data powered email.

Retention

Consumers love loyalty programs. In fact, 39% plan on increasing their loyalty program participation this year compared to last, while only 8% plan to reduce their participation. Loyalty programs that go beyond point-for-prizes not only give customers perks, but can also give you the opportunity to improve customer understanding and stay relevant. Of course, loyalty programs have the imperative benefit of rewarding repeat customers, thus driving sales and increasing customer lifetime value.

Building loyalty is about emotion and connection. It's not simply a discount program or a slew of points that will never be redeemed. These of course can encourage engagement and be an important tenet of a loyalty program, but they will not foster lasting loyalty.

Loyalty programs are laden with first-party data, but marketers need more than transactional data and inferred interests to increase relevance and build emotional connections with their loyal customers. Brands should be using zero-party data to deliver value

exchanges that drive deeper engagement. But don't see zero-party data gathering merely as another way to amass data, but instead as an opportunity to take loyalty initiatives to the next level. Your objectives for collecting zero-party data within your loyalty program can be used to guide existing customers to new products or services or drive customer engagement.

Consumers will always love a discount, but using a loyalty program to lean into your customers' actions, transactional or other, and acknowledging them is key. The heart of loyalty is not simply the cheapest price point, but instead, a brand that fosters community, recognizes the customer as an individual, and delivers personalized recommendations that reflect this.

89%

of consumers will trade personal and preference data in return for loyalty rewards.

 **49%** find this highly valuable

63%

of consumers will pay more to purchase from a favored brand.

67%

of consumers find loyalty programs to be an "important" or "critically important" factor in maintaining their brand loyalty.

Fleet Feet

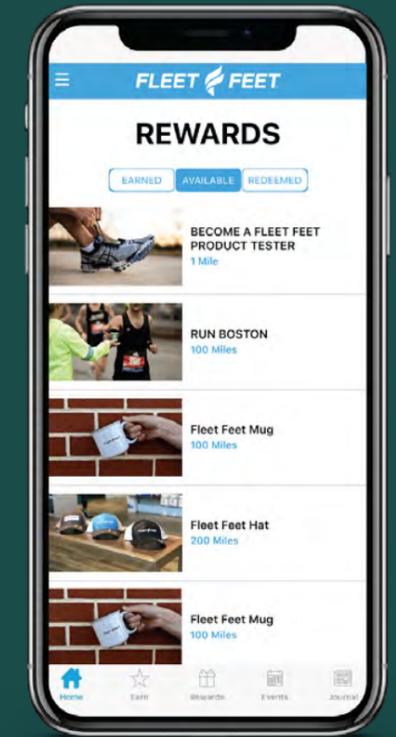
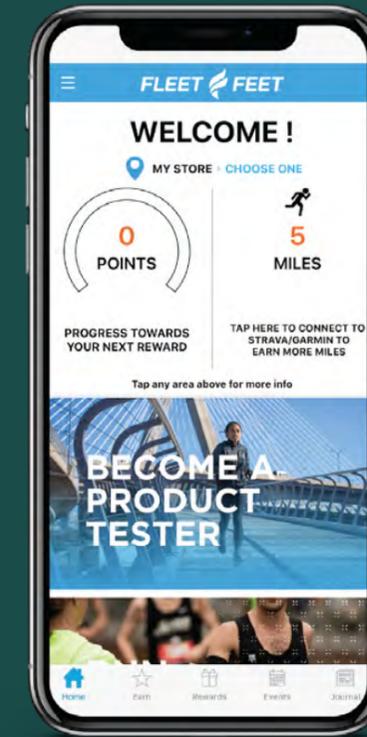
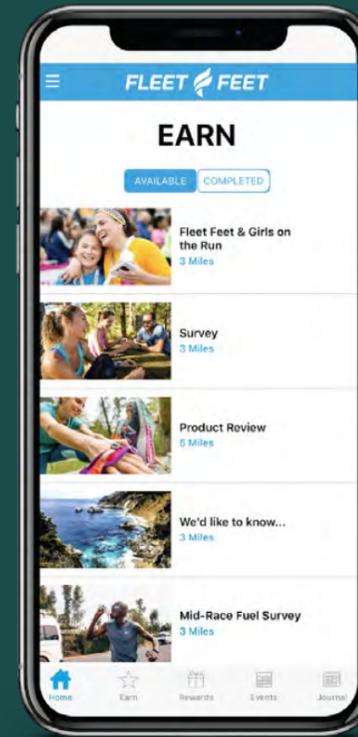
HYPER-PERSONALIZED LOYALTY

Since its inception in 1976, Fleet Feet has focused on more than just running shoes and apparel — it's also focused on growing and enhancing local running and walking communities. The brand offers educational resources and training opportunities to provide their customers with everything they need to reach their unique fitness goals.

They launched a loyalty app, powered by Marigold, that synced to runners' fitness trackers and supplied them with personalized shoe recommendations based on their running gait, the type of surfaces they run on and amount of miles they tackle. This hub collected both purchase and fitness activity data, creating a comprehensive customer profile that allowed the brand to deliver hyper-personalized, locally driven opportunities and offers.

Loyalty app customers can earn reward points through traditional actions like retail purchases and also from product reviews, surveys, and attending Fleet Feet hosted clinics, classes, events and training programs. Users can then use the app to redeem their points for exciting rewards such as Fleet Feet merchandise and sweepstakes entries.

These loyalty experiences, powered by zero-party data, helped Fleet Feet expand and improve their brand loyalty program and made its app the central hub of its digital consumer experiences, including communications and personalization.



10K

New app downloads
per month

3M

Zero-party
data records

93%

Net Promoter
Score

Keep exploring *with* our Data & Research

GET THE DATA



Explore the insights from over 10,000 consumers in Marigold's most comprehensive report of the year.

[Download the full report](#)

Marigold has the technology & teams you need to find your people, get to know them, and make them superfans.

[Schedule a demo](#)

OPTIMIZE YOUR SURVEYS



Great surveys are the gold standard for zero-party data acquisition.

[Download the guide](#)

Where *relationships* take root.

Marigold's approach to Relationship Marketing stands alone in a world of one-size-fits-all marketing technology companies. Our solutions are designed for your specific size, industry, and maturity, giving you the technology and expertise you need to grow the relationships that grow your business, from customer acquisition to engagement to loyalty. And, with a team of strategists that provide insights into what's working, what's not, and what's changing in your industry, you're able to maximize ROI every step of the way.

Great marketing isn't just about conversion, but true connection. Learn why 40,000 businesses around the world trust Marigold to be the firm foundation they need to help relationships take root.

Find out more at [MeetMarigold.com](https://www.meetmarigold.com)

