

THE CX ULTIMATUM FOR TELCOS AND CSPS

Why insight+activation adds up to the
future of your customer experience



HOW DEEP IS YOUR PERSONALIZATION?

Right now, many industries are staring at a deeply uncertain future. Telcos, Retail, and Financial Services are just three.

Loyalty is everything. But you won't win the battle for market share in your stores, your call center, or even online. You will only win it in your customer's mind.

In 10 years' time, the brands at the top of the pile will be those who made it their business to cultivate strong, long-term, profitable customer relationships—starting today.

If you're reading this, you're probably trying to make that shift already. What might be less clear is the giant elephant in the room that's been slowing your progress for years: [superficial personalization](#).

The world's top tech players—Apple, Netflix, Google—have put true personalization at the heart of their business. Their customers love it, and they want more.

But most other firms are still playing catch-up.

They don't have the data or the automation expertise to offer the tailored experiences at scale that make customers feel really good.

To close the gap, you need two things:

- [Insights](#)—to understand humans the same way humans do
- [Activation](#)—to automate intelligent actions for each and every customer.

And that's what this book is all about.

WHEN YOU'RE A PART OF CUSTOMERS' EVERYDAY LIVES, COMMODIFICATION IS NEVER FAR AWAY.

Your customer relies on you for important stuff. For example, you help them reach their friends, cook their dinner, or manage their money. But because you're always there, there's a danger that you get taken for granted.

Oh sure, your customers need your services. But how much do they actually think about you?

How would customers describe your service? "Unique and exciting"? Or "necessary and reliable"?

These days, people are spending more and more—but they're less and less satisfied with the service they receive. Service that was once considered "exceptional" is now simply what people expect. So churn is on the up, which is killing the bottom line.

For example...

There will be 10 billion connected devices in the world by 2025, but Telecoms remained the second-lowest scoring vertical in the 2018 UK Satisfaction Index from the Institute of Customer Service. (And a 2018 TM Forum Quick Insight Report found that churn rates are as high as 75%.) Nine out of 10 people already see their telco provider as a utility company.¹

In Financial Services, customers are crying out for first-time (if not predictive) problem resolution. And they're increasingly demanding digital experiences and interactions—which banks can't always provide.

Meanwhile, over in Retail, 66% of CEOs are already making customer experience their number-one priority. For their part,

shoppers and consumers value honesty and transparency more than transactional offers and points-based rewards. And while they certainly appreciate personalization, they don't yet feel that it's bringing them real value.

If this hasn't happened to you yet, it will soon.

1. <https://thebioagency.com/news-and-views/blog/telco-customer-loyalty-apathy-or-advocacy-2>

Actual utilities like water, electricity, or gas inspire no love, because they're boring. But your brand is at the heart of your customers' most meaningful experiences. *You shouldn't be in the same position as a light bulb.*

There's a lot of goodwill out there, just waiting to be grabbed. But too many brands are leaving it on the table by offering a DVD experience in a Netflix world.

The CX opportunity is to make the things your customers love more personal and more helpful. It means analyzing data to elevate every customer interaction into a continuously improving feedback loop of relevant, compelling experiences. That way, you can jump out of the pack by providing more value and better experiences at every interaction.

Best of all, you can do this without compromising on privacy. Get your CX right, and customers will willingly share their data as the price of admission.

All you need is the right data insights, and the right software solution to analyze and activate them.

Let's get started.



THE INSIGHT OPPORTUNITY

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The companies offering truly innovative customer experiences today have one thing in common: huge closed ecosystems of rich and highly differentiated insight data.

(And incidentally, a lot of them haven't been guarding that data as they should.)





FACEBOOK dominates the social media landscape with over a billion active profiles tied to real identities.

(It's also been fined \$5bn for sharing information about 87 million accounts with Cambridge Analytica.²)



APPLE amasses huge amounts of information on its +1 billion users—every time a customer uses their device, Apple knows when, why, and how.

(Whistleblowers revealed that not only is Siri always listening to users, but that Apple had failed to adequately de-identify the recordings³)



AMAZON has a panoramic understanding of its users' retail and entertainment habits, and it's building further visibility into the home through AI-powered smart assistants.

(Amazon staff revealed that outsourced workers around the world listen to sensitive information via Alexa recordings—with no clarity on the training they receive⁴)



NETFLIX feeds its algorithms behavioural data mined from 154 million user profiles to create increasingly customized content, recommendations and interface experiences.

(Netflix users are the second-most likely group to have their account information exposed in a data breach—behind Riot Games accounts⁵)



GOOGLE collects more data on consumers than any company on the planet—every search, every Android app engagement, every Google Map trip.

(In 2018 Google exposed personal information from 52.2 million accounts to unauthorized parties⁶)

2. www.independent.co.uk

3. www.forbes.com

4. www.theguardian.com

5. www.forbes.com

6. www.wired.com



For most companies today, aggregating those audiences, unlocking that data, and closing the loop between insights and service improvement is an almost insurmountable task.

Privacy is a huge concern. And processing insight data in those quantities is computationally astronomical.

That's why the CX landscape today is largely dominated by a handful of steeply walled gardens—and why laggards are forced to play by their rules (and often pay for the privilege).

However, there is another option. And it all starts with a whole new way of understanding insight.

WHAT IS TRUE INSIGHT?

Getting data is not the problem. Your customers are already generating terabytes of it every time they buy, browse, or interact with you.

That data is complex. It's made up of hundreds of real-time, unstructured, discrete data points. And it's sensitive as hell—because it reflects your customers' most personal details and decisions.

However, despite its depth and complexity, customer data has only limited value for marketers. But *true insight* is something completely different.

It's about understanding the *human meaning* behind the behaviors—meaning that's always been there, scattered across your data, but has been inaccessible until now.

True insight is about patiently building up a picture of your customers' needs, desires, and preferences, so you can offer them products and experiences that resonate with their emotions and their lives—right now.

However, that's only half of the story. The other half is making true insight useful to your marketers and CX teams, so they can use it to craft better outcomes for your customers.

That's exactly what [Insight Activation](#) from Intent HQ is designed to do. It's a series of capabilities across data architecture, artificial intelligence, machine learning and intelligent automation that provide a window into what individual customers really want, and the means to orchestrate tailored responses at scale.

Sounds good? Sit tight, because we'll explain the *how*—from both a technology and privacy standpoint—in the next two chapters.

But first, let's take a moment to consider the possibilities.

WHAT COULD YOU DO WITH TRUE INSIGHT?

Let's be honest. When it comes to insight, you're only working with a tiny fraction of the full picture. And that's for your best customers.

OK, you probably have some demographic and transactional information in your CRM and billing systems, and some basic record of your past interactions.

But if you tried to deliver hand-crafted moments and adaptive CX journeys from that, you'd be working in the dark.

Now imagine you've got that basic information, plus insight based on the real human context of your customers' core behaviours and interactions.

When you combine fragments of insight with what you already know, they add up to a wealth of actionable intelligence.

You can:

SEE what customers are interested in

UNDERSTAND their habits and priorities

SERVE what they need right now, based on what they actually do

PREDICT what they'll do next based on inference and interaction history

ANTICIPATE how they'd like to be contacted based on response history

In other words, you have *true insight* into what your customers want and need.

INSIGHT INTO ACTION: HELPING A PREMIER LEAGUE FAN ENJOY THE WORLD CUP

Telco X can see that Dan, one of its long-term, post-paid customers, dabbles in streaming content—but it knows the 4G network along Dan's commute often causes buffering. Telco X also knows that Dan has a 5G device but only subscribes to a 4G service.

Using insights constructed from your customer data using the Intent HQ platform, Telco X discovered that Dan has a strong interest in the Premier League. With the World Cup only a few months away, Telco X waits until the right time (Dan didn't engage much outside of bill cycles) and sends a promotional message, giving him a complimentary 5G upgrade for the entire World Cup.

And just like that, Telco X delivers an empathetic, intimate, dynamic customer experience that Dan will remember for many years. For Telco X, it's a chance for Dan to experience the benefits of 5G. But for Dan, it's his loyalty repaid.

Through true insight, your brand can become a CX leader. You can offer customized, life-centered experiences that are on a par with the ones Big Tech offers, and a level of customer experience that none of your rivals can match. And you can do it all automatically, in real time—without compromising on data privacy.

However, true insight only has power when it's activated. And to do that, you need a little more technology horsepower under the hood.



HOW TO

TURN INSIGHTS

INTO ACTION

HOW TO TURN INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

Looking at the potential of data, you might ask why more brands aren't using it to market already. There are two answers to that.

The first one, as we've seen, is superficial personalization. You can't build deep engagement with shallow data. Without true insight, personalization becomes a blunt instrument that's more likely to irritate customers than to delight them.

The other reason is manual processes. You simply cannot operationalize true insight with manual tools. They can't handle the complexity.

Sure, you can recruit an army of analysts to "boil the ocean" by analyzing everything manually. But it's not sustainable, and it's not scalable either.

CRMs have struggled with cross-system accuracy and consistency for years, and still do. And that's before you get into purchase data and clickstreams from your web visits and emails.

True insight only emerges from the relationships *between* these data points. And that depends on massive on-demand analytics, driven by machine learning (ML).

By operationalizing ML, you can build an automated workflow from insight to action and achieve *relevance at scale*. You can continuously process the *most* sensitive data in a privacy-safe way, and surface in-the-moment opportunities to create outstanding experiences.

Now, many brands already have ML capability. But they struggle to get the most out of it.

The problem is that data science teams are getting bogged down in wrangling data, servicing business requests, and administering the ML models they already have. What they need is an end-to-end ML solution that takes care of all the model admin and supports insight activation through systems of engagement.

That solution would look rather like Uber's Michaelangelo,⁷ which automates different aspects of the ML model lifecycle so engineering teams can build, deploy, monitor, and operate models at scale. Michelangelo is the genius behind the models that rank restaurants on Uber Eats, or calculate Uber's spookily accurate ETAs.

The challenge is to bring a mature and automated end-to-end ML solution to marketers and data teams everywhere.

And that's what Intent HQ's platform is designed to do.

7. <https://www.kdnuggets.com/2020/07/some-things-uber-learned-machine-learning-scale.html>

WHAT IS THE INTENT HQ PLATFORM?

The Intent HQ Platform is hugely versatile and designed to empower marketers and data teams leverage Insight Activation for mass relevance.

The Intent HQ Platform has three key elements.

The [Intent Cloud](#) data architecture ingests and processes the universe of customer data floating around your organization and turns it into real human insight.

The [Intent Workflow](#) is an intelligent automation solution that distributes those insights to relevant teams and uses an automated end-to-end ML flow to activate and operationalize them across your systems of engagement.

Traditional CDP providers, like Oracle Data Cloud and SAS Customer Intelligence Platform, are attempting to bolt on this type of capability piece by piece. But Intent Workflow was specifically designed to help brands activate the value inside their data in a privacy-first way.

The third element of the Intent Platform is the powerful data visualization application [Insights Explorer](#). Insights Explorer puts insights into the hands of marketers, making data activation faster and more effective. The highly visual, interactive user interface offers an intuitive solution that requires no specialist coding skills to handle the data. Instead, you can simply drag and drop the criteria you need and get instant insight.

WHAT THE INTENT HQ PLATFORM BRINGS YOU...

Multiple applications of the truth, from a single trusted source, because all data is organized by each individual customer and held within the Intent Cloud.

Superior insights using AI-driven enrichment and prediction.

Real-time intelligence to “know, infer, and predict” customer attributes and behaviors from data patterns and act on them.

Hyper-personalized experiences across all customer touchpoints.

An easy-to-use dynamic user interface with powerful analytic tools to answer questions and surface audiences.

Privacy-first principles throughout to ensure full regulatory compliance.

See for yourself. Book a demo and see what the Intent HQ Platform can do in your organization.

So that’s the view from a thousand feet. But what does that all look (and feel) like to customers on the ground?

[Let’s dive in...](#)

THE INTENT HQ PLATFORM IN ACTION



Imagine you're John, a young father aged 29.

You've got a lot going on right now: the new baby, a busy job, and an impending house move. No wonder you haven't really given your telco a second thought since you signed your contract two years ago.

In the stolen moments between changing diapers, speaking to solicitors, and booking removal vans, there is also the disruption of transferring your fixed line and broadband account to your new home..

But then, the week before your moving date, you get a message from your telco: free mobile data for the next three weeks while you get your fixed-line connection transferred, plus a discounted TV bundle if you upgrade to quad-play in your new home.

You're delighted. That's one less thing to worry about—and one more thing to look forward to.

WHAT'S GOING ON UNDER THE HOOD

Where a traditional CRM might simply flag John as a churn risk and push a discount on a new handset, the Intent HQ Platform is doing a lot of heavy lifting to support this interaction back at John's telco.

First, the Intent Cloud has ingested all the consented data relevant to John into a single, personal data lake, and converted it into behavioural insight ready for near-real-time processing.

Next, the Intent Workflow can transform those behavioural insights into data elements and features in support of a huge range of activation use-cases.

In this case, an ML model running in Intent Workflow constantly analyses the millions of new data points in Intent Cloud to identify patterns of behaviour that might relate to new interests like real estate, legal services, and removal firms.

Consulting lookalike customer profiles to infer insight, preferences, and future behavior, Intent Workflow realizes that John is about to move house. Now would be the worst time for a hard-sell on a high-value SKU item.

Instead, Intent Workflow ascribes John a "home-mover" lifestage identifier that qualifies him for a much more relevant, useful, and nuanced offer. Enabling marketing platforms downstream to push the offer of greatest impact.

Thanks to Intent Workflow, all this insight, analysis, decision-making, and execution can happen seamlessly and automatically for every customer at scale.

But one vital piece of the puzzle is still missing.

Privacy.

THE NEW

STANDARDS

OF PRIVACY

THE NEW STANDARDS OF PRIVACY

(AND WHY THEY'RE SO IMPORTANT)

By now, we hope the CX opportunity is clear: to unlock the valuable insights in your customer data and use it to provide outstanding experiences.

However, customer data is inherently sensitive. That's why governance and consent are foundational to this whole story.

The first step to becoming a CX leader is becoming a privacy leader. It's not about manipulating customers into letting you have their data, but giving them positive reasons to share it.

You need to earn the right to deliver the hyper-personalization that insights make possible—in your technology choices, your approach, and your models of consent.



HOW INTENT CLOUD HELPS

To leverage true insight and achieve mass relevance, you need a user-centric storage solution that's built for insight and activation.

In other words, a solution that is:

- Architected for privacy from the ground up
- Optimized for real-time performance at scale
- Created with AI baked in.

Intent Cloud is specifically engineered to provide meaning within customer data quickly, securely and at scale.

THE RIGHT APPROACH TO PRIVACY

We never store or work with raw customer data directly. Instead, we use an approach called embedded data privacy.

Embedded data privacy tokenizes raw data and then converts it into simplified and depersonalized strings of numbers— without retaining the specific behavior that created them.

We use a micro-database architecture to store every profile as an individual, tokenized and encrypted entity, and process them individually, on demand.

That approach is privacy-safe and far more efficient for activating mass relevance, at scale, in your downstream systems of engagement.

These strings of numbers mean nothing beyond the platform—but Intent Workflow and Intent Insights Explorer use them to work out the relationship and meaning of co-occurring actions. And you can use them to surface hyper-personalized insights and operationalize timely, relevant interactions.

Ready to see Intent HQ in action?

Ready to find out how easy it can be to surface true insights and act on them? Talk to us about a demo of the Intent HQ Platform [here](#).

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

Technical feasibility is one thing. But quality of experience is something else.

Customers won't accept anything less than tangibly valuable interactions. They've been stung too many times before.

On one side, they're reading about multiple high-profile data breaches. On the other, they're tired of being guinea pigs for over-enthusiastic marketers. Big Tech has shown them what great personalization looks like—but they've also been beaten down by sloppy personalization from overfamiliar brands for years.

Here's the thing about marketing with data: customers need to feel good about it, or it won't work. You're building an experience where people want to *opt in*—not getting away with whatever you can and concealing the *opt-out*. And that takes care and commitment.



THE RIGHT CONSENT

People are rightly sensitive about their personal data because too many companies have used it in a careless, secretive, and downright greedy way.

You need to stop thinking *What can we get away with?* And start asking *How can we make this worth it?*

Part of that comes down to the quality of your products and services. But the prize for consumers is regaining control over their digital lives.

If brands start using customer data in the right way, they can redraw the lines on privacy and spearhead a new, inclusive model of customer relationships.

With the rich, human-based profiles created by Intent HQ, you can offer customers much finer-grained control over their consent. By inferring exactly how and when customers like to be contacted, and about what (and more), you can co-author highly nuanced models of consent on a one-to-one basis.

BEST PRACTICE PRIVACY STILL APPLIES

Our new approach to privacy doesn't replace best practice—it extends it.

The Intent HQ Platform:

- Encrypts data in transit and at rest
- Supports tightly configured access controls for approved users and use cases
- Uses advanced anonymization techniques—like noise injection, aggregation, attribute and record suppression, masking, pseudonymization, and generalization
- Is certificated to information management standards such as ISO27001

THE TIME
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The CX opportunity is huge.

Brands who take decisive action now are going to build an unassailable lead. And we believe they can only do so by adopting insight+activation, achieving mass relevance, and building a privacy-first culture.



The possibilities are endless. For example, you could:

GROW revenue with enriched data that lets you know when customers are ready for up-selling, cross-selling, and tailored offers

STRETCH revenue and margin performance by identifying campaign audiences based on your customers' behavior and interests

PREDICT what your customers are going to do based on their behavior or circumstances—then act on it early to prevent churn and increase value

RETAIN customers by delivering relevant, specific campaigns and offers

SCALE and select audiences without impacting ROI by replicating successful selections and using lookalike audiences

IMPROVE the reach and precision of your campaigns by selecting relevant customers—and achieving higher conversion rates

UNDERSTAND what makes your customers tick, and identify the interests, external events, and lifestyle segments that you can target, measure, and learn from

PERSONALIZE your messaging with real-time data centered around customer interests, needs, and life-stages

PROTECT your customers and their data, and comply with privacy laws around the world

SURFACE opportunities for product development and co-branding that your customers genuinely want—at the time they want them

ORCHESTRATE customer experience at every step of the journey, so your customers have a consistent cross-channel experience based on a single source of truth

SEQUENCE and monitor billions of customer actions against model customer journeys, so you can predict and act on any signs of deviation

This is the start of something big. Telco, Retail and Financial Services brands have long aspired to catch up with the personalization leaders in Big Tech, but have been held back by privacy. Now there's a chance to understand your customers in a completely unique way—using data you already own.

It's the chance to redefine what great customer experiences should feel like, and set a new standard for everyone else to catch up to. And that kind of opportunity doesn't come along every day.

There's a lot more to talk about and even more to do.

And we'd love to help you do it.

READY TO GET STARTED?

The next step you take could change everything for your organization.

[Try a short demo](#), and we'll show you how.