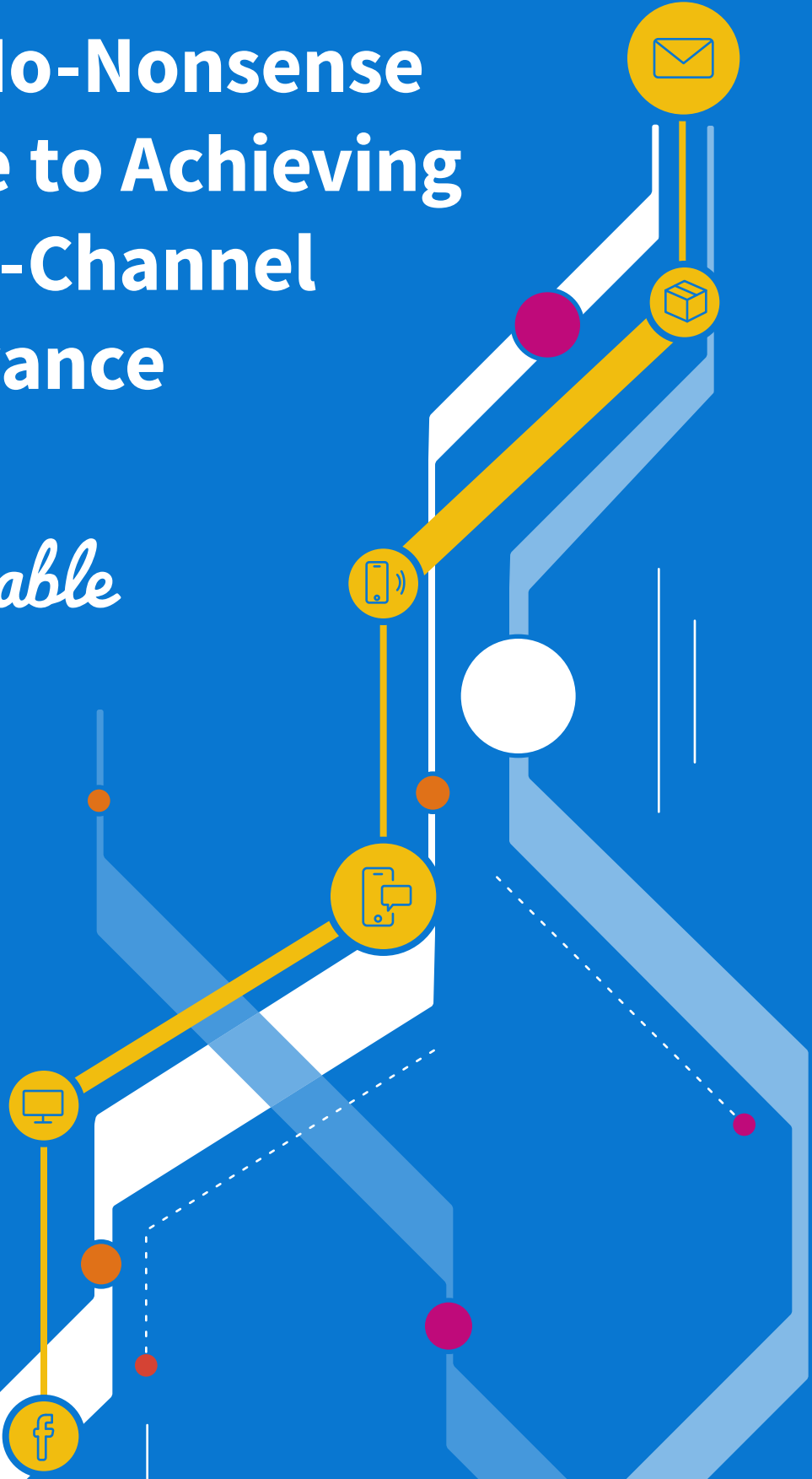


# The No-Nonsense Guide to Achieving Omni-Channel Relevance



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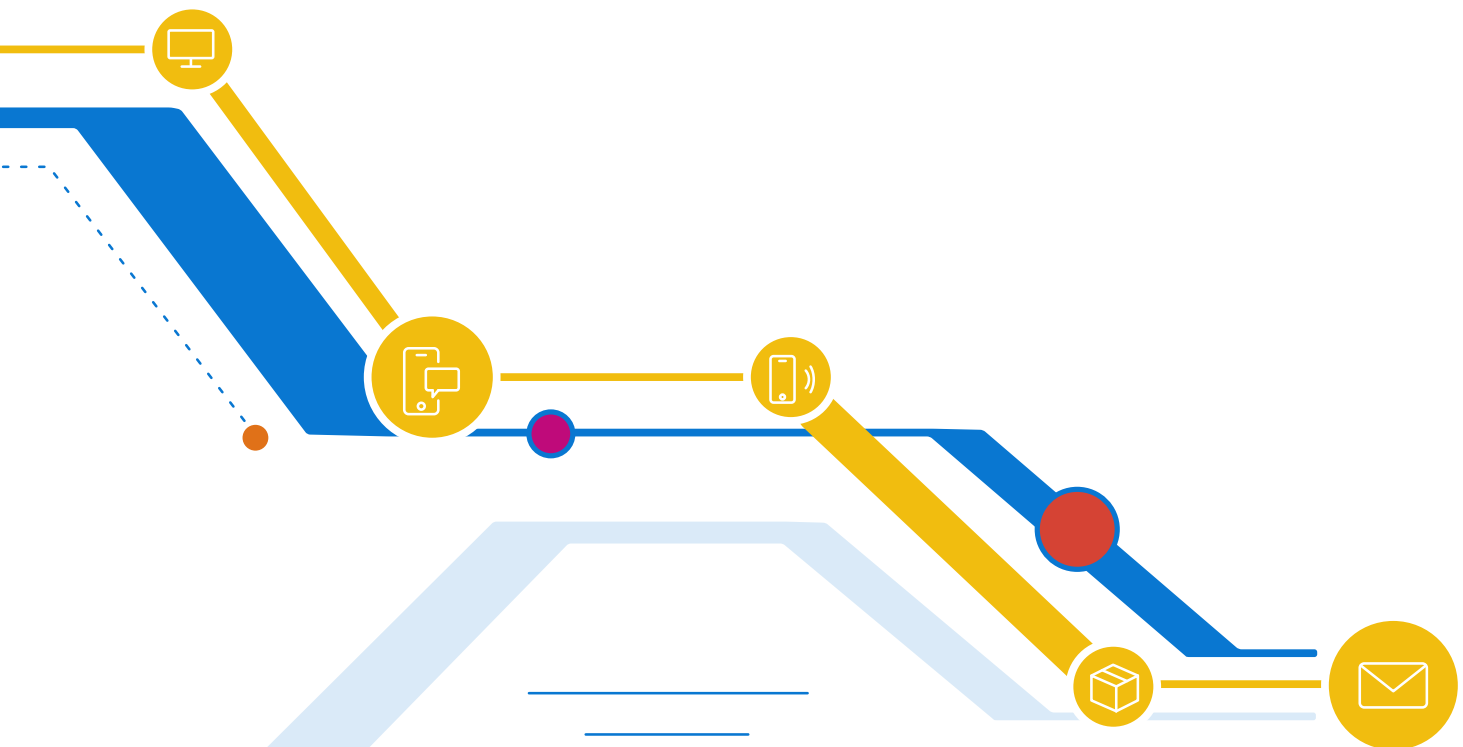
# We're All About Omni-Channel

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Since the term “omni-channel” was first coined by the [Harvard Business Review](#) in 2011, some marketing technology vendors claimed that they could provide businesses with this holy grail of brand ubiquity. Unfortunately, most of these early claims were false starts where vendors over-promised and under-delivered.

The good news is that a select number of solutions have caught up with all the promises and can now turn them into action. In this guide, we explain why the conversation around omni-channel marketing has changed and how you can transform your marketing strategy to leverage this new, powerful technology.

We'll give you a heads up on the roadblocks you'll encounter on your journey to achieving omni-channel relevance and the benefits you'll gain once you reach your destination. No highfalutin jargon, no talking in circles and no nonsense. Just practical advice on how to create a superb customer experience.



# Going Omni-Channel in the Now Economy

What has changed in the past decade that has made an omni-channel marketing strategy mission-critical? Recent technological advancements have ushered in what industry experts call the “Now Economy.” Industry-leading companies like Uber, DoorDash, Spotify and Snapchat have revolutionized how consumers live, work, shop and communicate.

These corporate powerhouses have transformed consumer expectations. For instance, we used to accept the fact that a trip to the airport would require booking a cab several days in advance, but today we’re disappointed if we have to wait longer than five minutes for an Uber. We demand that brands give us exactly what we want, when we want it—right now.

But as consumers’ access to information and on-demand services increases, a brand’s ability to respond to their needs becomes increasingly complex. Here are two key reasons why many businesses are struggling to keep up in the Now Economy.

## Getting Lost in the Noise

The average consumer is exposed to [10,000 brand messages](#) a day, the majority of which hold little relevance. In response to this onslaught, [94% of customers](#) discontinue brand relationships if messaging is off base. The margin between a click or an unsubscribe is razor-thin when a brand misses its mark.

## Fighting the Fragmentation

Consumers trade a wealth of data in exchange for (what should be) better customer experiences. However, most businesses are doing a poor job picking up on their customers’ digital body language: [80% of consumers](#) receive inconsistent brand messaging across channels. Delivering a seamless, personalized experience is how companies can use their customer data for good.

In the Now Economy, it’s more challenging than ever to grab consumers’ attention and keep their loyalty. To defeat the competition, brands must prove their worth with every customer interaction.

### What’s Required to Thrive in the Now Economy



ON-DEMAND  
CONVENIENCE



REAL-TIME  
CUSTOMER SUPPORT



MEMORABLE BRAND  
EXPERIENCES



PERSONALIZED  
SERVICE



94%

OF CUSTOMERS  
DISCONTINUE BRAND  
RELATIONSHIPS IF  
MESSAGING IS OFF BASE

# Omni-Channel Relevance, Defined

Unlike terms like multi-channel or cross-channel, which focus on coordinating the distribution of messages across multiple engagement channels, omni-channel marketing goes a level beyond to power true brand relevance.

But what exactly does this mean? Let's break down the concept.

## Omni

Meaning "all," this prefix implies that having multiple channels at your disposal, be it web, mobile or social platforms, isn't enough. They *all* must be connected seamlessly for messaging to be effectively aligned.

## Channel

Contrary to popular belief, taking an omni-channel approach isn't about being channel-specific; it's about being customer-centric. Being accessible isn't the same as being useful, so make sure to communicate with customers on *their* terms.

## Relevance

Once you've personalized each message to the individual customer across all channels, you evolve past being a mere presence *here and there* to being a prominent voice *everywhere*.

Marketing in the old days was designed to be one-size-fits-most, but today, that's not the case. The future of marketing is responsive, and establishing a meaningful dialogue between your brand and your individual customers is key to achieving omni-channel relevance.

## Are You Leveraging All These Channels?

- EMAIL
- DIRECT MAIL
- SMS
- IN-APP NOTIFICATIONS
- RICH MOBILE PUSH NOTIFICATIONS
- WEB PUSH NOTIFICATIONS
- SOCIAL MEDIA

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# The Roadblocks Holding Marketers Back

We promised no nonsense in this guide, so we'll be the first ones to admit that achieving omni-channel relevance is easier said than done. Most marketers understand the importance of engaging their audiences wherever they are, but few can actually accomplish this seemingly herculean task. **But why is that?**

The primary reasons why marketers cannot deliver a truly relevant experience to their customers can be boiled down to these three major roadblocks.



## Inconsistent Consumer Experiences

Inconsistency is typically seen when marketing teams use multiple point solutions for each channel. In fact, when you consider that the [average marketing stack](#) consists of 12 tools, it's no wonder why most teams aren't delivering seamless experiences. When you're using different tools to send email, direct mail and mobile messages, your customers will notice those differences—and not in a good way.



## Ineffective Communication

Not only is it common for a marketing team to use siloed technologies, most organizations are also internally siloed. When transactional and marketing emails are sent by different teams or brands within a larger corporation aren't in sync, misalignment is bound to happen. How can you expect to talk with your customers effectively if your team doesn't communicate well with others in the business?



## Lack of Real-Time Response

Even if you removed the previous roadblocks by consolidating platforms and removing organizational silos, if your marketing stack consists of legacy technology that was built for developers, then you're unlikely to act quickly enough to meet your customers' real-time needs. Marketers' skills lie in audience acquisition strategies, content and campaign creation and targeted messaging development...not running custom SQL queries!

# The Benefits of Being Truly Omni-Channel

We've discussed what it means to take an omni-channel approach to marketing and what the roadblocks are to achieving relevance. Once you have invested in best-in-class growth marketing technology and committed to an omni-channel strategy, you can remove those roadblocks and gain access to three core benefits.



## Elevated Engagement

Using a single platform to personalize messaging across multiple engagement channels—email, direct mail, SMS, mobile push, web push and social media, among others—enables marketers to engage customers wherever they interact with brands.



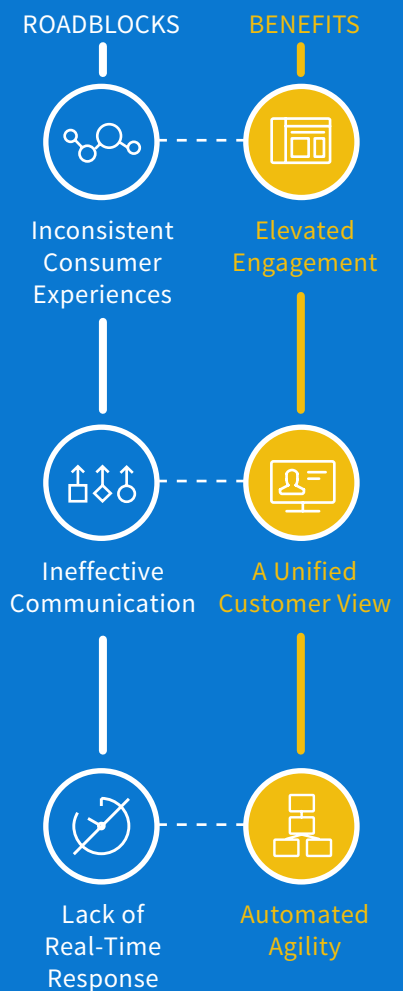
## A Unified Customer View

Once you replace multiple point solutions with a single platform, you can eliminate organizational and data silos to leverage all your customers' demographic, behavioral and event data in real time. With a complete picture, messaging your audience becomes more effective instantly.



## Automated Agility

No more custom scripting or waiting on an army of developers to complete a simple segmentation. Instead of relying on legacy tools that require technical resources, marketers are given the agility to quickly respond to customer needs and deploy seamless, automated campaigns across all channels.



# The Five Pillars of Omni-Channel Relevance

Presence on multiple channels is an important step toward building awareness, but it takes omni-channel relevance to elevate a brand from being simply noticed to being truly embraced.

Achieving relevance requires a deeper understanding of each individual customer—a challenging feat but far from impossible. After determining the key components of stand-out brands, we have identified five pillars that make up the foundation of a robust omni-channel strategy. **Understand what role they each play in your business and answer the questions we pose for a quick gut-check on how your marketing can reach the next level.**

## 1 **Cadence:** Coordinate communications across all channels

At any given moment, you're sending a variety of messages to a massive number of subscribers. Cadence represents how effectively these messages are being coordinated to tell a unified story that resonates best with your audience. Most businesses talk *at* their customers, many talk *to* them, but the elite few are able to talk *with* them.

To understand whether your messages are coordinated, ask yourself:

How often are you messaging your subscribers, and are you letting them decide that frequency?

How does a customer's experience vary as they engage with each channel?

How easily can one team access customer data from different channels?

## 2 **Automation:** Respond to every customer behavior or signal in real time

Consumers judge a brand on its ability to respond instantaneously to their shifting needs. If your marketing team spends more time slogging through the manual work that it takes to execute campaigns than taking swift, decisive action, then you're missing valuable opportunities to captivate your audience.

To determine whether your marketing is truly automated, ask yourself:

Are the types of communication you're sending behaviorally triggered?

How long does it take to create and deploy a new segment or campaign?

How quickly can you act on newly captured customer data?



### 3 Mediums: Consider your brand story as the sum of all its parts

We look at mediums not solely as the channels used by a brand, but also as the cohesive experience created from all forms of communication. Marketing channels rise and fall in consumer popularity (for instance, email's still a mainstay, while a new social platform dominates the scene every few years). See the forest for the trees by ensuring that all mediums share unified messaging, regardless of what's currently on trend.

To evaluate the cohesiveness of your brand story, ask yourself:

Which mediums matter most to your customers, and what does your brand presence look like on each of them?

How consistent is your messaging at different points of your customer's journey?

How would integrating a new communication channel complement your customer's experience?

### 4 Personalization: Segment your customers on their terms

Low-level message personalization, based on basic demographic information or isolated data points (like a single purchase) can be nearly as damaging as not personalizing at all; a limited customer view increases the likelihood of sending stereotypical or irrelevant content. Encourage active participation in every conversation so that your campaigns resonate with each customer.

To identify how to better personalize your messaging, ask yourself:

How unique are your messages to individual subscribers and segments?

Are you segmenting dynamically using unique behavioral and event data?

How often do you request customer feedback to improve personalization?

### 5 Value: Reinforce your reputation with every single message

The most innovative brands recognize that it is important to give more than they take; only by putting in their due diligence can they achieve lasting credibility with their customers. Value is built incrementally over time, so it's vital that you treat each interaction as an opportunity to strengthen rapport.

To determine whether you're delivering real value to your customers, ask yourself:

Does the experience you're providing outweigh the "ask" that your message is making?

Do your customers understand why your business serves them as clearly as what products or services you offer?

How useful are your communications from your customer's perspective?

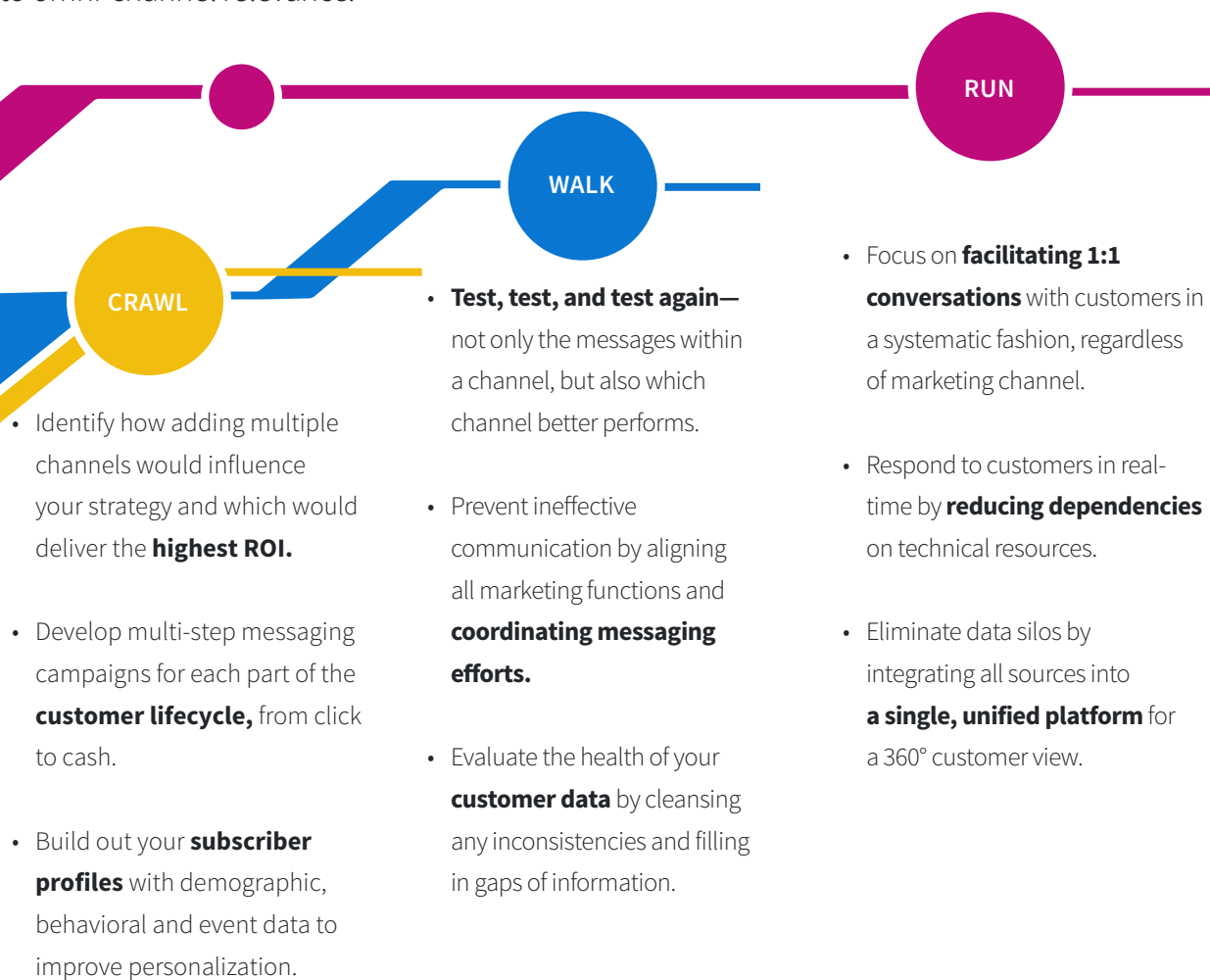
#### Tying It Together

If you're serious about elevating the consumer's perception of your brand, now is the time to get creative with omni-channel marketing. Proving your worth as a resource in a fiercely crowded market is more of a challenge than ever—earning consumer mindshare will enable you to stand out as your competition inevitably evolves.

# Turning Strategy Into Reality

Anyone who claims that you can become an overnight omni-channel success is talking nonsense, but you can make incremental improvements today to optimize your marketing programs.

Whether you're taking baby steps to go beyond the basics or ready to win a marketing marathon, here is an easy-to-remember action plan to crawl, walk, then finally run your way to omni-channel relevance.



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# Embracing Omni-Channel With a Growth Marketing Platform

It's clear that the traditional marketing automation tools of the past haven't effectively enabled marketers to gain a better view of their customers—which has led to the over-promising and under-delivering of omni-channel marketing.

Marketing automation implies that everything is business as usual, just slightly more efficient. Growth marketing moves beyond incremental improvements and accelerates business forward.

Growth marketing platforms like Iterable apply engineering strength to marketing expertise—solving not only the challenges that marketers face today, but also the ones they'll face tomorrow.

By leveraging technology that's as agile and innovative as their brands, modern marketers can achieve omni-channel relevance.

# About Iterable

Iterable is the growth marketing platform that powers personalized omni-channel marketing at scale. Iterable captivates consumers with highly relevant and personalized messaging, activates campaigns on any type of internal and external customer data, and allows marketers to automate campaigns across all channels that matter to their consumer.

Iterable exists to create rewarding relationships between people and brands. By making it easy to build campaigns and test strategies at scale without engineering support, Iterable gives marketers the freedom to focus on the nuance in messaging and magic in storytelling.



## Modern Architecture

Iterable is built with industry-leading Elasticsearch technology. Onboard unlimited data, segment on real-time behaviors, personalize your message at scale and deliver to millions across multiple channels.



## True Omni-Channel

Amplify your messaging resonance at enterprise scale with a personalized, true omni-channel experience across email, mobile, direct mail, web and social.



## Single Data Platform

Ingest unlimited data from any platform, including commerce, service and data providers. Understand your customers' actions while reducing data silos.



## Workflow Studio

Iterable's highly visual, drag-and-drop workflow builder triggers campaigns with an unlimited number of steps, branching and A/B tests.



## Easy to Use

Iterable is built for marketers, who can now create sophisticated campaigns without technical resources. Use one platform to plan, execute and manage omni-channel campaigns.

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