

# More Research Shows that Consumers May Not Always Want Personalized Marketing Experiences

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**Amy He**

**M**any marketers may want to believe that customers prefer personalized marketing experiences, but while research backs up that claim, recent consumer skepticism over the use of personal data means that there's a growing sentiment that more personalization does not beget a better experience.

For our recently released report on personalization and data-driven experiences, Nicole Perrin, principal analyst at eMarketer, found that marketers generally insist customers want personalized marketing experiences. Marketers she spoke with also conveyed that committing to personalization is the bare minimum needed for successful targeting campaigns.

"Marketers, especially digital marketers, love data and the promise of optimization it holds," Perrin said. "And many report a lift in engagement, conversions or other behaviors they're trying to drive, based on tailoring relevant messages. But while a 1-point lift for a marketer may be a result worth celebrating, it doesn't necessarily mean consumers are perceiving those messages as personalized and highly relevant."

In March 2019, Periscope By McKinsey asked US internet users what type of personalized content was most appealing; no answer garnered an outright majority of responses. Half of respondents said that products related to their interests were appealing, and only four responses appealed to at least one-third of those polled.

**What Do US Internet Users Think Is the Most Appealing Type of Personalized Content to Receive from Companies?**

% of respondents, March 2019



Note: n=1,010 ages 18-69  
Source: Periscope by McKinsey, "The Art of Personalization: Keeping it Relevant, Timely and Contextual," April 30, 2019  
247126 [www.eMarketer.com](http://www.eMarketer.com)

Respondents were also asked what businesses they wished to receive personalized messages from, and in the US, 52% said they would prefer them from restaurants and bars, but no other category appealed to the majority of respondents.

“Consumers have been less than impressed by ad and other message relevance, despite marketers’ data-driven efforts,” Perrin said. “As they’ve become more aware of the personal data collection that underpins marketing personalization and targeted advertising, they’ve also started indicating they’re not sure it’s worth handing over their personal information in exchange for relevance.”

In a study conducted by risk management firm RSA Security, 29% of internet users surveyed from France, Germany, the UK and US said

that providing more data to companies leads to better products and services, which is down 2 percentage points from responses the year before.




When asked about whether various forms of personalization were ethical, 45% of respondents in the same study said that using personalization to monitor fraud was ethical. Only 17% said that tracking online activity to tailor advertisements was ethical.

For more analysis on how marketers are using data to personalize customer experiences, eMarketer PRO subscribers can read our latest report, the second in a four-part series on customer experience:

**Report** by Nicole Perrin Jun 11, 2019

**Customer Experience 2019 (Part 2) — Personalization and Data-Driven Experiences**



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