

The Marketer's Guide to **First-Party Data**



SIGNAL[®]

Bringing First-Party Data to the Forefront

For years marketers have turned to third-party data sources, investing millions of dollars in data about consumers assumed to be interested in their product to enhance targeting strategies. That's fine if prospecting is your goal. But how are you marketing to the customers you already know?

Most marketers know that it is less expensive – and more profitable – to retain customers than to find new ones. **Repeat customers will spend 33% more** with your brand than new customers. And just **one-fifth of existing customers will account for 80% of your future profits.**¹ What's more, the people who have previously interacted and transacted with your brand have given you the most precious of marketing assets: first-party data.

*Research has shown that first-party data garners the highest return on investment of any data type, and it has the potential to do even more.*²

However, many marketers lack the right technologies and data strategies to fully leverage its potential and turn to third-party resources to fill in the holes. While data from third-party sources can enhance customer acquisition strategies, it can't explain a customer's relationship with your brand and their path to purchase. Plus, there's nothing unique to third-party data that can just as easily be sold to your competitor. And then there are the inherent issues to working with third-party data – quality, accuracy and recency, not to mention the expense.



In this age of consumer empowerment, to create the type of personalized and highly targeted experiences that drive brand loyalty and customer retention, you need to be able to understand and respond to customer wants, needs and intent with relevancy and timeliness. What better way than using the actual data that details every customer interaction with your brand? ***It's fresh. It's free. It's yours.***


Now, learn how to make the most of it. In this guide, we'll teach you how to leverage your first-party data to make your media more addressable across channels and devices.



Your Most-Trusted Resource

First-party data is the foundation for understanding your customers because it's based on actual interactions with your brand across the vast array of consumer touchpoints, both historical and in real time, rather than the behavior of lookalikes that occurred weeks or months ago. It's the data a customer entrusts to you, in exchange for your superior product or service. And it's the only data that offers the types of insights and control you need to recognize, relate and respond to your customers in more relevant and meaningful ways.

While using first-party data to market to known customers is not a new concept for retention strategies, the approach for doing so is. Today's people-based marketing discipline leverages all of a brand's offline and online first-party data to reach and engage actual customers wherever they are in their decision journey. As marketers increasingly adopt this people-based approach, brands are starting to expect more from their first-party data. In a recent survey of marketers using at least two to three categories of data, two-thirds of them believed that first-party data provides the best path to consumer understanding and, therefore, performance. Not surprisingly, 82% of them stated that they will increase their use of first-party data over the next year.²



Nearly 75% of marketers cite first-party data as generating the greatest insight, with another 18% tapping into the first-party data of their trusted partners.²

First-party data is...



Accurate

It doesn't get more real than information a customer is telling you directly or that you observe from their behavior.



Unique

Your proprietary information, unlike lists bought and sold on the open market, is highly valuable, and should be treated as such.



Free

It's right at your fingertips. No wonder why nearly 70% of marketers agree that the case for first-party data is the easiest to make.²



Fresh

Third-party data decays over time and leads to wasted media spend. Your own data is current and actionable.



Granular

The kinds of detailed data you can collect is limited only by your imagination.



Owned

Unfettered by rules or partnerships (except when agreed upon), once data is collected, you can slice and dice it any way you want.

Take Stock of Your Resources

Today's consumers interact with brands across multiple devices and channels, both digital and offline. It's a complex and fast-changing landscape, with new touchpoints constantly emerging. But the important thing isn't the number of channels you use - it's creating better brand experiences that will delight customers and drive conversions.

The key benefit to all these touchpoints is that they allow brands to collect a wealth of data about their customers. This proprietary data can be connected and used to develop a deeper understanding of how they behave and what they want, and for powering cross-channel execution and addressable media campaigns. To make the most of this data, marketers need to think strategically about all the digital points and where they interact with consumers, as well as the offline warehouses where they store information about their customers.



WEBSITE

Your company's website can provide a wealth of data on site visitors, from names and email addresses to visitor behavior and transactions. Plus, there are additional behaviors you may track, such as when users hover over text or images, for specific retargeting strategies.



MOBILE WEB

Although the mobile version of your website can collect most of the same data as the full version, not all mobile devices allow the use of JavaScript or cookies. Encouraging users to log in to your site allows you to collect meaningful user interactions, even in a cookie-less environment.

Fewer than 50% of marketers are taking advantage of the consumer data produced over mobile web and apps.²



MOBILE APPS

Your app users are some of your most enthusiastic – after all, they made the effort to download your app. To ensure you're extracting useful data from your app, define which user events are meaningful, and then be sure to log and measure them.



EMAIL AND SMS

Email marketing solutions offer data like open rates, click rates and bounce rates that date back to the beginnings of your digital marketing efforts. Even more is the granular data on who is opening your emails and whose interest is flagging, allowing you to segment audiences and run specific campaigns targeted to different levels of engagement. SMS data is similar. Because text messaging is an intimate form of communication, customers who allow you to engage with them via SMS show a high level of interest.



POINT OF SALE AND CRM

This offline data may be your greatest source for online targeting and activation of your best customers – particularly, the level of personalization it affords when you know a customer's purchase history. This data is also very useful for measurement and analysis: You can see what's selling, what's not and where.



BEACONS

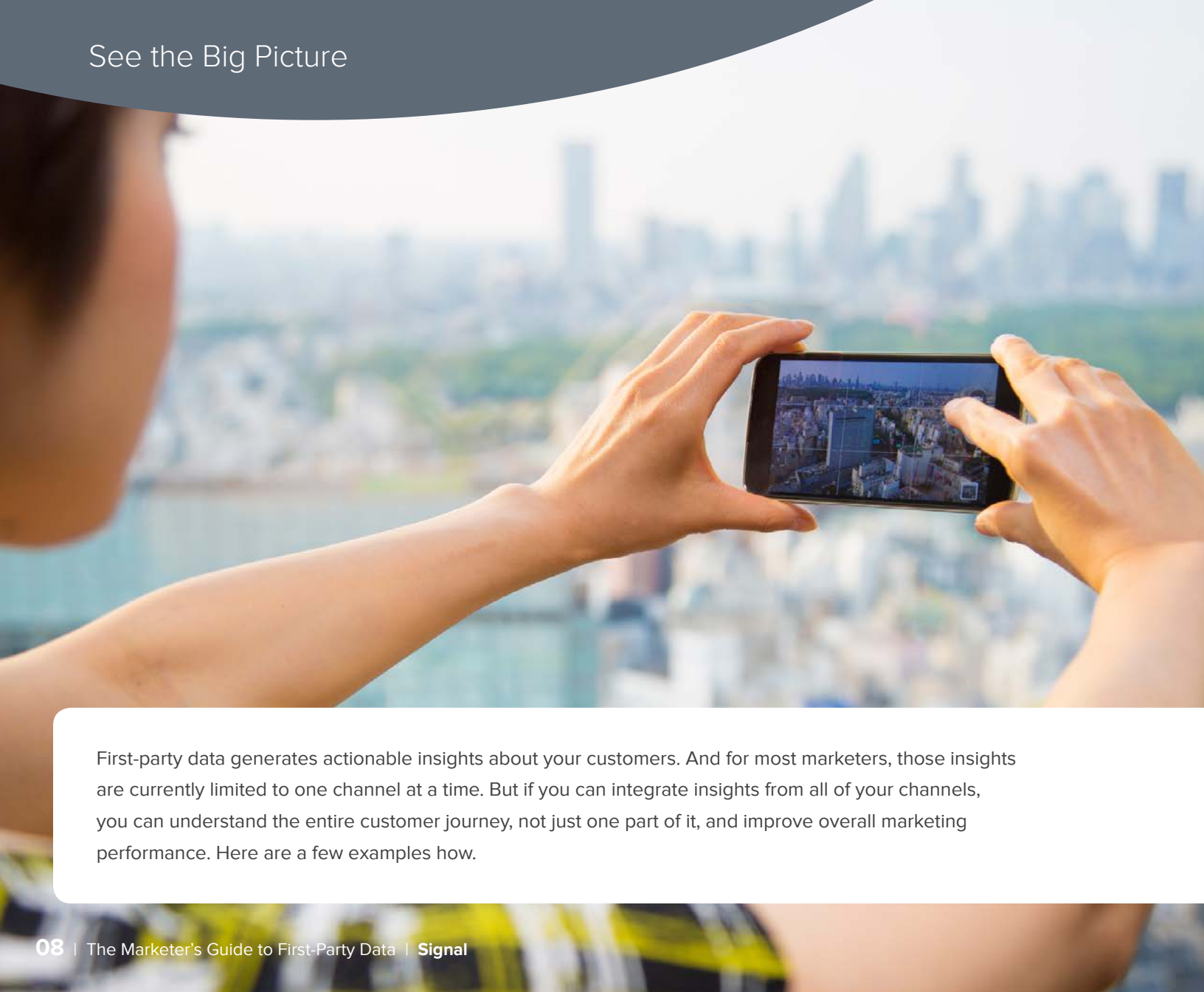
The next step for retailers, beacons provide new kinds of in-store and location-based customer data. Beacons offer enormous data potential, as they capture detailed aspects about a customer's behavior.



CALL CENTERS

Sometimes the most important customer interactions happen at call centers. They are often where new accounts are initiated and where problems surface. While you may have invested in automation, systems and training to improve selling and service, you should be sure to collect the rich data being produced.

See the Big Picture



First-party data generates actionable insights about your customers. And for most marketers, those insights are currently limited to one channel at a time. But if you can integrate insights from all of your channels, you can understand the entire customer journey, not just one part of it, and improve overall marketing performance. Here are a few examples how.

Improve targeting precision.

To achieve true addressability and targeting efficiency for digital advertising, marketers need to shift away from cookie-based tactics toward people-based strategies that leverage a brand's own first-party data to identify real people across devices and channels. First-party data helps marketers reduce ad waste, increase conversions with more relevant and precise targeting and, ultimately, drive ROI.

Map the customer journey.

By accessing and merging your first-party data from one data hub, you can map the customer journey, discovering the different steps that customers take on their path to conversion and the order in which they take them. This, in turn, helps you deploy the right messaging at the right stage in the journey, as well as develop tactics for pulling customers back on the road to conversion.

Create a single view of the customer.

Each of your customers may be represented by multiple individual, anonymous profiles as they engage with you offline and online across the web, mobile apps, email, brick-and-mortar stores, call centers and other touchpoints. Unless these profiles are merged into a single identity, you will never be able to understand how cross-channel and cross-device marketing work together to inspire your customers to take action.

Advance cross-channel measurement.

When you connect your cross-channel data, you can see how a customer moved from an email to a website to a mobile app before completing the purchase in store. With a complete view of this process and its many variants, you can segment and optimize for different audiences and guide behaviors that lead to conversion.

Close the loop on attribution.

Insights from cross-channel data can be employed to influence media allocations and budgets. This data reflects how each point in the customer journey affects conversion, offering a more accurate way to analyze attribution. By performing analysis across channels, you can understand how budget shifts affect online engagement and in-store sales.

Increase relevancy.

As consumers have grown more sophisticated, they've come to expect higher levels of personalization – and for brands to recognize them across channels. First-party data delivers better intelligence and new possibilities to tailor messaging and shape the customer experience. Based on what you know about your customer and their behaviors across touchpoints, you can design unique brand experiences customized to specific interests, preferences, location, purchase history and more!

Take Your Data to the Next Level

The path to getting more from your first-party data is clear. But being able to collect and react to first-party data about your customers wherever they are on their consumer journey is also a significant undertaking. Here are four key steps for taking your first-party data to the next level.



1. Create a roadmap for your first-party data.

Your first-party data is the foundation for a larger cross-channel marketing strategy that can help you achieve lower-funnel objectives, such as customer loyalty, retention and upselling. Define your marketing and customer experience goals and objectives, the tactics and analytics required to execute on the strategy, and create a roadmap for how your cross-channel marketing capabilities will develop over time, breaking down the long-term effort into smaller projects that show incremental ROI at each stage.

Marketers with high-ROI initiatives are much more likely than their peers to have plotted a long-term data strategy – 44% vs 16% – with measurement processes agreed upon and in place.²



2. Determine the right data sources and data points.

Audit your data sources to identify what data is being generated and how it's being measured. Cross-reference your data sources and data points with the data requirements of the marketing and analytics use cases you plan to execute and make sure you collect the data that's important to your objectives.



3. Demand more from your data.

Customers are demanding more personalized and relevant experiences, and your first-party data is critical for doing so. Be sure to connect your offline and online customer data to inform creative messaging and addressable media strategies to engage customers wherever they are across channels and devices. Targeting customers with speed, accuracy and value, reduces ad waste, drives click-throughs and conversions, and improves ROAS.



4. Benchmark and monitor over time.

Utilizing your first-party data is a long-term, ongoing process. It's important to benchmark your first-party data capabilities, monitor progress and integrate what you've learned at every step along the way. Identify the key success metrics for your solution, both in terms of operational capability and support for cross-channel marketing initiatives. Track data volumes, sources, processing speed, profile depth and which data is activated for analytics and measurement.

The Signal Solution

At Signal, first-party data is our expertise. Our data platform was built, specifically, to help marketers simply and quickly make use of their rich troves of first-party data for real-time people-based marketing.

No other data solutions provider offers one technology that combines first-party data collection, persistent identification, onboarding, audience matching and segmentation for real-time, cross-channel execution. Using Signal's platform, advertisers can immediately recognize and engage with customers wherever they are across digital touchpoints when they are actually shopping for a product – not just assumed to be.

*And this leads to greater conversions,
less waste and an increase in ROI.*

“

Signal is the enterprise solution that allows us to unify data across channels and use that holistic view to be better marketers. That's about merging engagement data and cross-channel identity to deliver personalized messaging and more-efficient targeting.”

- Stella Voutsina, EVP, Digital Operations, Data & Technology, Assembly



With the Signal platform, brands can:



Target customers simply and quickly when they're in market for a product.

Signal's fully integrated platform allows advertisers to easily and instantly identify and react to the freshest and most recent customer intent signals. With zero hands-off between providers, customers can be recognized, targeted and engaged at just the right moment – *in less than one second.*



Power real-time cross-channel engagement.

The Signal platform employs persistent, cloud-based identifiers – so customer profiles aren't tied to decaying, third-party cookies. Advertisers benefit from long-lasting, durable profiles that are continuously enriched and ready for activation across the web, mobile, apps or any connected devices.



Maintain control and ownership of their data.

Signal's open, neutral platform gives brands complete control and ownership of all their first-party offline and online data and profiles. With a unified view of their customers, advertisers gain valuable consumer and campaign insights and can close the loop on attribution.



Increase scale with superior targeting options.

Participating in cooperative identity networks powered by Signal's platform, advertisers and publishers can securely share their in-market addressable audience segments to exponentially increase the number of available and known customers. Reflecting the freshest and latest state of the consumer, the quality of this data is unmatched.



“Signal is one of the pillars of our first-party data asset. Using Signal’s unique ID, we will be able to tie together multiple different unique IDs in our analytic system across devices and browsers using authentication events based on the Signal platform.”

- Ben Hemphill, Director of Digital Marketing and Analytics, Crocs

“The ability to view the customer through a single lens enables critical measurement, optimization, efficiency and personalized use cases. **Signal is helping empower us to understand the panoramic customer journey.**”

- Jason Niemi, Associate Director, Marketing Information Systems, Kraft Foods Group

“Signal, for me, is an enabler. It’s about picking up the various signals and pulling them together to a centralized point. It’s this unifier of data for us. My team is officially three people strong – we’re small but mighty. Signal helps us do more.”

- Rafael Zorrilla, Director of Marketing, Colorado Technical University

Use the Highest Quality Data

Third-party data isn't enough anymore. Brands are realizing the limitless potential of first-party data for driving marketing success. In Signal's recent study of data usage among marketers, more than 80% plan to increase their use of first-party data, and they consider it the lynchpin of their data-driven strategy for the future.²

By offering unmatched insights into actual customers, first-party data helps marketers target ads with precision, create better customer experiences, build brand relationships and loyalty, and increase the bottom line. First-party data is the highest quality data marketers can use, providing the foundation for deep customer knowledge, reliable measurement and addressability in digital advertising.

Customer expectations are higher than ever - and so are expectations in the C-suite. Understanding what consumers want and when they want it demands better data. If you can't understand your customer's journey and the impact your marketing has along the way, you're wasting time and resources. Sure, staying on course with today's consumers is challenging as they hop from one channel or device to the next. ***But with the right technology and data strategies, you'll discover the most direct route begins and ends with the data you already own.***

Sources:

¹ <http://www.invespcro.com/blog/customer-acquisition-retention/>

² [signal/econsultancy first-party data white paper](#)



*Make the most of your
first-party data.*

Learn how Signal can help.



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