

To enhance the individualized shopping experience, “natural navigation” is created as consumers are presented with links, cross-sells, search results or related products that are distinctly personalized for them. These can be in the form of recommendations (“customers who bought this also bought this,” “our experts/editors recommend this”) or filtered and personalized search results. This supplements existing navigation options such as the product catalog hierarchy, recently-browsed item lists, and promotions created by the retail merchandiser.



Figure 1: Automate where possible with marketing scenarios, business rules and targeting structures to create an ongoing responsive user experience which flexes over time based upon incremental knowledge gained from consistent listening techniques.

The bottom line is that many companies may have software, processes and personnel to listen to customers (and potential customers). What is lacking is the integration, automation and communication to turn their site visits into individually compelling experiences.

In examining this lack of integration of content and commerce, retailers are missing opportunities to:

- reduce the cost of sale by increasing the efficiency of content entry/promotions
- increase customer loyalty by creating a personalized experience
- increase average cart value by displaying in-preference items at the right time

Strategy & Tactics for Integrating Content and Commerce

How can a retailer capitalize on these missed opportunities? By closely integrating content and commerce, and truly listening and responding to customers’ input in an infinite and progressively granular fashion. A 2007 survey in *Usability News*¹ states “user interaction with a site before entering the checkout process is more critical to a site’s success than the purchase itself.”