



Appier's Ultimate Guide to Understanding, Analyzing & Optimizing the Customer Journey

Every customer, whether potential or existing, is on a journey with your brand.

From the moment they first become aware of your company to their decision to make a purchase and the customer support after, every customer is somewhere on a customer journey with your brand.

This is why as marketers, you need to pay special attention to the customer journey and the ways in which your customer journey design decisions impact your customers' experience with you.

We wrote this guide with all marketers in mind: marketers who are starting to build a customer journey for their companies and marketers who are analyzing their existing customer journey for ways to optimize customer interactions.



What is the Customer Journey?

The customer journey is the sum of all the experiences a customer has with your brand. It includes all the channels, touchpoints and content that customers can encounter as they learn more about you as a brand.

An easy way to think about the customer journey is in stages, as it is typically visualized in a customer journey map. The typical main stages of the customer journey are: awareness, consideration, conversion, adoption, and advocacy.

At each stage, a customer is interacting with your brand in multiple different ways, whether that is on your website, social media or via email.

Regardless of the sequence in which a customer reaches each of these touchpoints and/or channels, your goal is to move them forward — towards a conversion.

To move customers along the customer journey you have carefully designed, you need to get inside their heads and understand what is driving them as well as what is holding them back.



Common Customer Journey Challenges for Marketers

The biggest challenge for marketers is putting themselves in their customers' shoes and understanding what they are thinking about as individuals.

Most analytics tools allow marketers to see numerical data and visualize the overall trend of how customers behave, but the limitations that exist in understanding each customer as individuals, segmenting them into appropriate target groups, and predicting likely next actions are challenges for marketers that remain unsolved.

Other common challenges are as follows:



Tracking Issues: Deciding what metrics to track and being able to track them are a must to provide marketers with the information they need. Yet, this in itself can be quite tricky for marketers to do without the right solutions.



Data Silos: Data stored in different platforms can result in silos that make it difficult for marketers to access all the data available and necessary to get a comprehensive picture of the customers.



Inconsistent Messaging: Delivering personalized messages and recommendations is the new norm that customers expect, but marketers may have a hard time achieving this without a proper understanding of each individual customer or the tools to create an omnichannel experience.



The Solution: An AI Customer Data Platform with Strong Analytics & Predictive Capabilities

John	
Properties	Actions
LAST ACTION TIME	2023-03-30 07:13 AM
AVG SCREEN PER...	35%
NAME	John
EMAIL	John@appier.com
PHONE NUMBER	+555-555-5555
COMPANY SIZE	11-50
LINKEDIN ID	1234567
TWITTER HANDLE	@appierjohn
INSTAGRAM NAME	@appierjohn

In the face of these challenges, what can marketers turn to for help? What will give them the extra boost they need to connect with their customers on their customer journeys?

Our answer is AIRIS, an AI-powered customer data platform (CDP) with strong analytics and predictive capabilities that turn insights into actions.

1. Accurate & Complete Customer Profiles

The customer is at the center of every marketing decision companies make. This is why being able to see your customers and understand them beyond the numbers and figures they make up on your dashboard is crucial for business success.

A pageview for a particular blog or a click of a button in a product does not reveal much about the customer. However, when you string all the actions together to create an accurate and comprehensive customer profile, the story surfaces.

Collecting and connecting customer data to create a customer profile is challenging because the customer journey begins long before you know who the customer actually is. To build a customer profile, you need to track anonymous users, sometimes for weeks or months, until they sign up, and then apply their identity to the previously anonymous data retroactively.

AIRIS does exactly that, collecting and collating all of the data related to an individual user from all of your marketing and product analytics tools. It builds comprehensive user profiles that allow you to track a single user's full journey, or segment users based on almost any factor you might want: behavior, demographics, engagement patterns, etc.

Having all of a user's data (or a user segment's data) unified in this way empowers marketers to do their best work by making it much easier for them to understand who their customers are and how they behave.

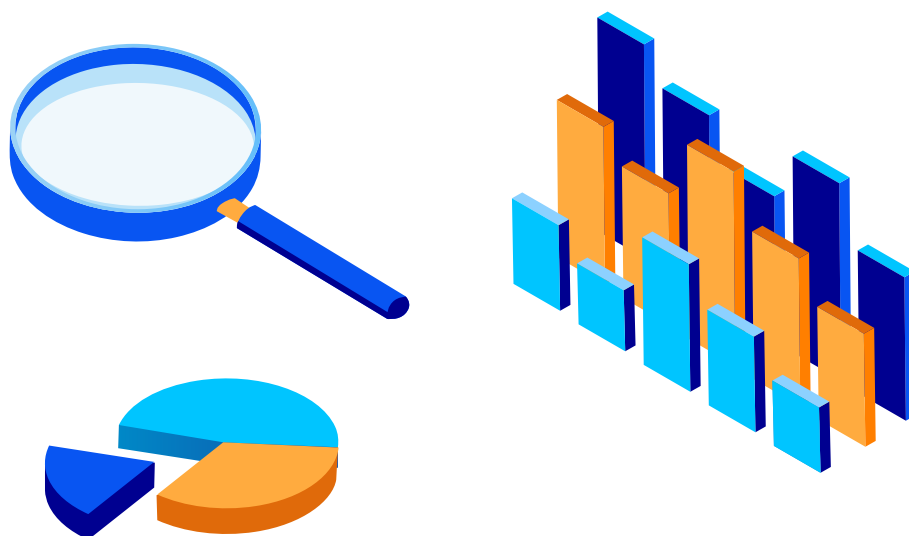
2. One Data Ecosystem with Fast Visualization

Understanding the entire customer journey requires tracking a lot of data. But more importantly, it requires unifying and visualizing that data so that it can be understood in context, by anyone.

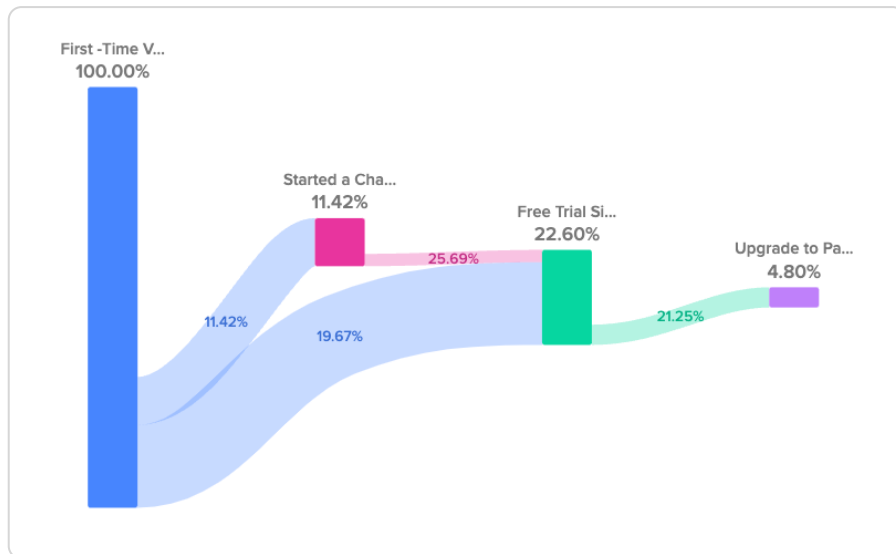
This is an area where most companies struggle. For example, consider onboarding: we want to know how the most successful users move through the onboarding flow.

At many companies, this would mean getting website traffic data from the marketing team, helpdesk data from the support team, sales data from the sales team, and maybe even writing complex SQL.

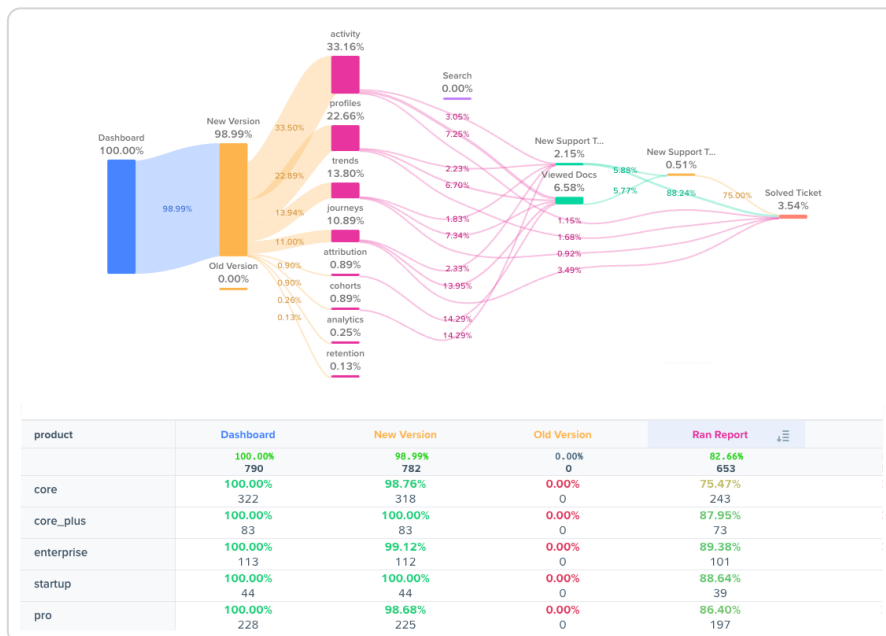
The integration of all of that data from a variety of sources into a single location is critical, but so is the visualization. Too often, this kind of data is pulled and combined manually and shared as an Excel file.



Not only is this manual collection and collation process time-consuming, but it also makes it easy to miss insights. Humans are visual creatures, and a simple chart like this one from AIRIS that rate over time is easier and faster for us to understand than the wall of numbers in Microsoft Excel:



This combination of collating data from multiple sources and visualizing it clearly is critical for spotting trends quickly. With AIRIS, anyone can identify a trend, with historical context, by loading a trends report:



Collecting the right data is one thing, but leveraging that data requires combining data from different sources so that all of the data relevant to a particular customer is linked. And all of that data has to be provided to your teams visually, using a platform that makes it easy to consume and avoids the trap of hiding valuable data behind technical barriers or organizational red tape.

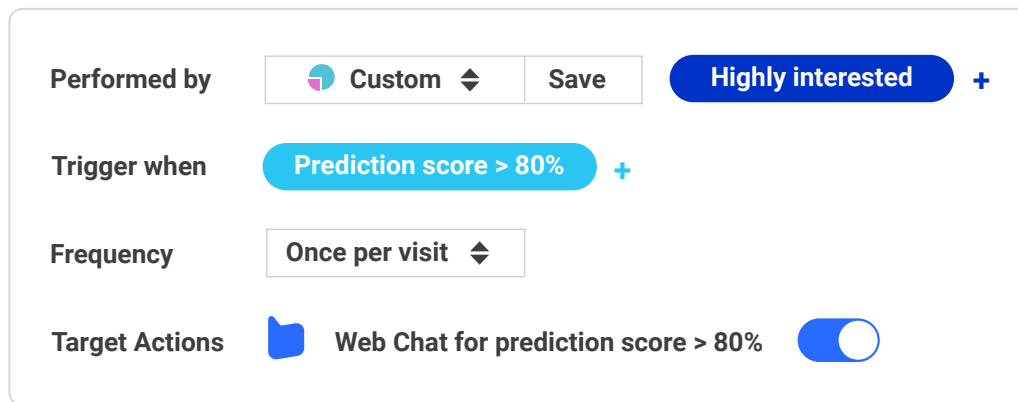
3. Effective Segmentation & Powerful Personalization

Knowledge truly is power, but how you use that knowledge is what drives performance.

Once you have comprehensive customer profiles and visualized trends reports, you can start segmenting your audience and provide them with the most personalized customer experience along their journey with your company.

AIRIS optimizes the time it takes marketers to go from data to insights, and with a shorter analysis time, marketers can take action faster.

By knowing who makes up their audience and what their needs and interests are, marketers can effectively segment them into different groups to target. Different segments respond to different incentives and calls-to-action, and AIRIS enables marketers to better engage in precision marketing.



The image shows a configuration panel for a marketing campaign with the following settings:

- Performed by:** Custom (with a dropdown arrow), Save, and Highly interested (with a plus sign).
- Trigger when:** Prediction score > 80% (with a plus sign).
- Frequency:** Once per visit (with a dropdown arrow).
- Target Actions:** Web Chat for prediction score > 80% (with a toggle switch that is currently turned on).

The more precise the marketing approach, the more personalized it should be. Nowadays, personalized greetings no longer cut it as a novel way to add a human touch to customer interactions. If businesses want to win over the hearts of their customers, they need to deliver personalized content.

Whether that is a blog post that can address a user's challenges or product recommendations that are what the customer has been searching for, these types of personalized content are what will make an impression on customers and prompt them to move forward on their journey with you.

What Now?

Now that you have come to the end of this guide, you know what challenges lie ahead but also what solutions are available to you.

[If you want to give Appier a try and learn more about AIRIS, reach out to us now. We are just a few clicks away.](#)