

How data democratisation is making the digital world more human

By Mathilde Brygier, Senior Content Marketing Manager, Contentsquare

Data is undoubtedly the new gold. But when 70% to 75% of websites are still inaccessible to people with disabilities, and three-quarters of consumers are worried about how their data is used (Adobe Trust Report), we still have a long way to go to unlock the full value and potential of data.

That's why we invited **Mark Ladham, Director Group Digital Trading, Optimisation and Support at Kingfisher**, **Joost de Scheppers, Director of User Growth Optimisation at Spotify** and **Niki Hall, Chief Marketing Officer at Contentsquare** to the CX Circle stage in Paris. The trio discussed all things data—from the importance of democratising it to how it can help make digital more human.



Democratisation of data is crucial to making (the right) decisions

"Without data, you're just guessing," explained Niki. For Contentsquare's CMO, business decisions can no longer be made based solely on intuition. Data-driven decision-making should be a priority for all businesses and their marketing operations.

For all three experts, data is the compass that enables teams to make the right decisions based on an improved understanding of customer expectations. Joost at Spotify said: "We use data every day in all our decision making. It's in everything we do."

During the discussion, it was clear that all three were facing similar challenges and issues (regardless of operating in very different markets):

- Building resilience in a world where crises have become the new normal
- Improving conversion despite an overall drop in site traffic
- Providing customers with unique digital experiences

Data should be available to everyone

For a compass to guide you, everyone involved needs to know where north is. Mark explained that as distributors, sharing data between brands and retailers is essential, because it provides insight into the end customer's needs and improves transparency.

However, silos between brands and distributors, particularly in terms of data, are still very distinct. This is one of the biggest challenges in democratising data across the value chain. Allowing everyone, whether brands, employees, or consumers, to have the same level of access to data isn't easy.

But data is everyone's business. And it should bring value to the people who sell products and the people who buy them.

How does the democratisation of data create value?

Data democratisation helps you move away from selling products to providing experiences. "Anyone can sell anything online," said Mark. "But if you want to sell an experience, data is crucial."

Kingfisher (known for its brands like Screwfix and B&Q) is focused on levelling-up digital experiences. "It's about making the customer journeys as quick and as personalised as possible," said Mark.

To do this, Mark said it's important to provide customers with support throughout their journey to discover solutions and products. Mark explained: "As you go through the journey and you're searching for a drill or a bigger purchase such as a bathroom, we try to give you the best recommendations."

These recommendations are often from other customers who have bought products, which not only helps their customers find the best solution, but also saves their valuable time.



Shared data allows for better personalisation

Spotify aims to surprise its users by accurately predicting what music they like and want to listen to using machine learning. "Data is our bread and butter in everything we do," said Joost. "We use data to try and predict what people want to listen to, what people like, before they've even heard of the artist or song."

Using data for personalisation creates a unique and enriching experience for each user. And in the future, Joost said that Spotify's services will continue to focus more on personalisation and improving their machine learning algorithms.

Shared data helps pinpoint hidden business opportunities

Kingfisher uses Contentsquare's digital experience analytics cloud to better understand its customer behaviour. "The data shared in the Contentsquare platform gives access to information that has infinitely more value, such as unsold products or things people look for on a website but didn't or couldn't buy," said Mark.

At Spotify, they've started aggregating data in personalised data hubs, which allow artists and labels to discover who

their audience is, where they're from and what other music they listen to. Joost suggests that this insight could be used to inform tour locations or design merchandise. He emphasised the power this kind of data sharing has, saying: "It's the secret recipe for Spotify."

Shared data will help localise your products and services

Spotify is also using customer data to provide more relevant experiences to all their users regardless of their location. "We're active in more or less all countries in the world," said Joost. "So we're trying to focus on providing the best user experience in each region."

He gave the example of innovating payment methods to allow users in different locations to easily access Spotify services. "While it's easy to pay with a credit card or PayPal in the UK and the rest of Western Europe, it's not always the case in other countries," said Joost.

Allowing customers to pay quickly via Google has removed this barrier to purchase and accelerated conversion in other countries.

Building trust with more human digital experiences

With only 7% of brands using behavioural data to improve their customer experience, and consumers increasingly distrusting brands with their personal information, data sharing needs to take a more human approach. A prime example of this is Spotify's privacy hub for app users, which is designed for transparency and explains how users can hide or share certain personal information.

Giving users control over their data is just one of the ways brands can build more trust with customers. Creating more human digital experiences also means making them inclusive, inspiring and innovative. This vision is the cornerstone of Contentsquare's mission and is clearly showcased in the brand's new logo design, as revealed by CMO Niki Hall.

"During the rebranding of Contentsquare, we had three options for our new logo design on the table," said Niki. With one of Contentsquare's main values being digital accessibility, the decision was made based on data, opting for the simplest logo that would be understood by people with disabilities.