



LEVERAGING AI AND ML FOR DIGITAL MARKETING WITH SITECORE CORTEX

Abstract

To improve how they attract and engage customers, digital marketers must leverage best-in-class tools that feel the pulse of customers. Machine learning and artificial intelligence are already disrupting operating models. This paper examines how artificial intelligence and machine learning can reimagine digital marketing through automation and optimization. It also explores the ways in which Sitecore Cortex enables ML-based digital marketing.

Mining insights from Data with AI and ML

Bill Stein, a seasoned Digital Strategist took over the operations of AbCognito Inc. around 5 years ago. He helped the electronics components retailer become the industry leader with his innovative digital marketing strategies. On his flight back home after attending a conference on artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), Bill is thinking about how he can use AI and ML to further drive customer engagement.

Just like Bill, many CXOs are interested in exploiting the capabilities of AI and ML to stay relevant and remain competitive. There is an enormous amount of customer behavior data



available across social and other online channels. Research shows most companies are ready to invest in machine learning to leverage the data available today. Such machine learning solutions can help generate data insights that enable businesses to elevate customer experience.

Machine learning is a subset of artificial intelligence. It relies on historical data to learn patterns that can be used to streamline processes. In the context of digital marketing, user behavior data is essentially a goldmine. It contains data on multiple customer dimensions, which helps finetune the digital marketing levers.

Applying ML Insights in Digital Marketing

Machine learning tools can process customer data to generate useful insights and leverage these insights to optimize the marketing content strategy. With this, marketing teams can shift their focus and efforts to other critical areas. Some of the key avenues for leveraging machine learning for digital marketing are listed below:

Content Optimization

Customer insights provide vital information that can streamline user journeys and increase conversions. Such insights also help understand the customer better and create personalized recommendations for additional business. It helps companies identify a niche segment of customers and engage them with the most relevant content and product advertisements. Businesses are also better able to understand the limitations and constraints of their offerings and fine tune or create new product lines based on customer needs.

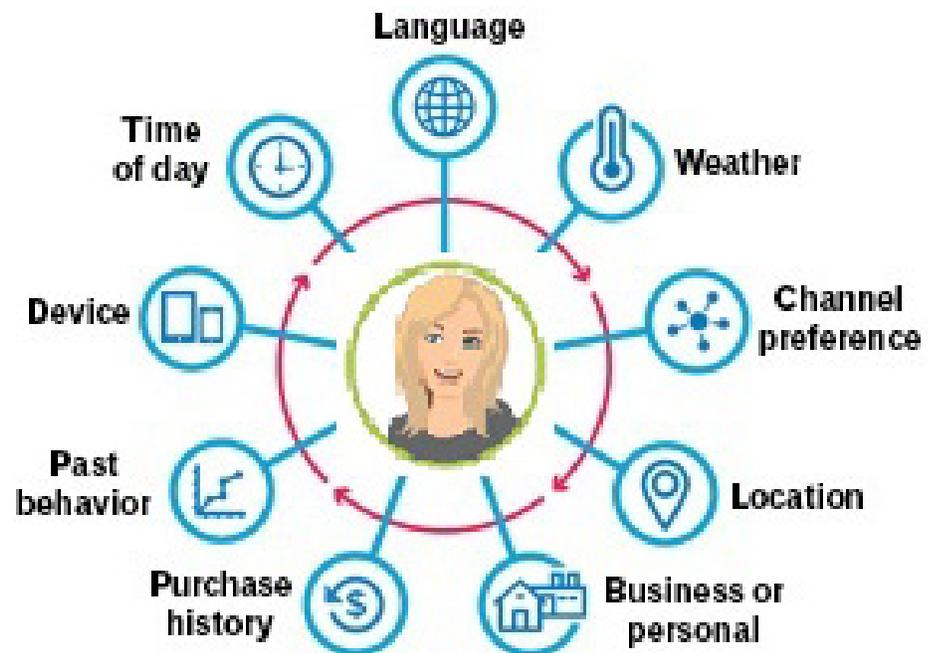


Figure 1 – Customer segmentation dimensions

Customers expect brands to care about them. They want content, product, offers, messages to be tailored specifically for them. When done right, this greatly enhances

brand loyalty. Interestingly, it is technologies like machine learning that can help provide this personalized touch, making digital marketing channels more human.

Marketing Automation

Gone are the days where marketers did not fully understand their target customers and rolled out campaigns based on inaccurate or incomplete information that did not resonate with the consumer. Today, 'experience platforms' can automatically track web site interactions and email interactions and store these in Customer Data Platforms (CDPs). With the advent of machine learning, experience platforms can quickly identify trends

from CDPs and optimize or finetune the campaigns accordingly without human intervention. Experience platforms help marketers to better understand their customers and their preferences to establish individual connect.

Conversational Marketing

Machine learning is the corner stone for the success of conversational marketing through its use of chatbots across customer experience channels.

Chatbots engage customers and keep learning from user interactions to provide appropriate responses. They also act as an efficient 24-hour support system that eventually reduces reliance on support personnel, thus leading to cost savings. Chatbots seamlessly integrate and work in conjunction with Digital Experience Platforms (DXP) like Sitecore. Together, these enhance customer support capabilities, enable targeted content intelligence, and capture customer feedback.

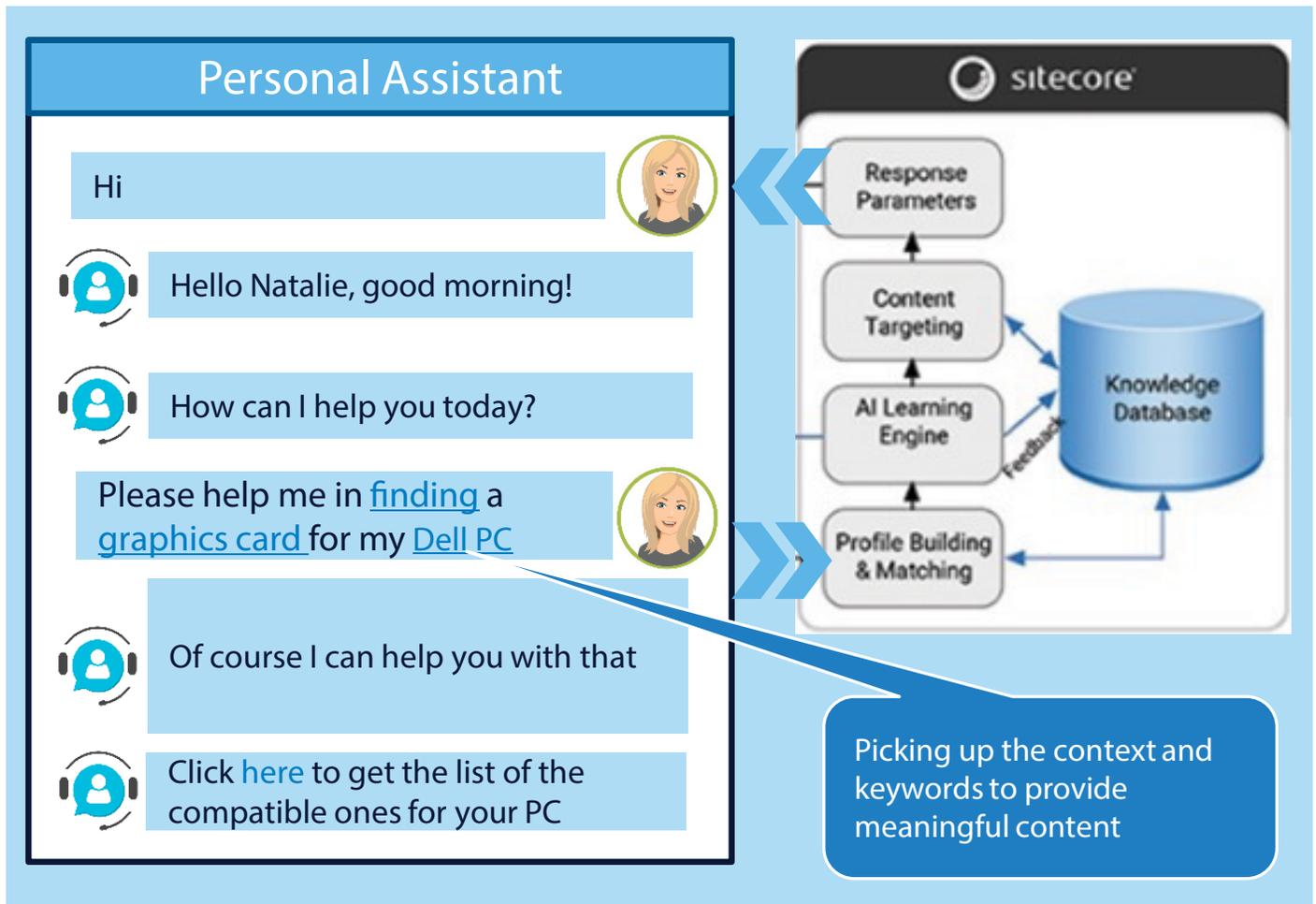


Figure 2 – Conversational Marketing in action

Sitecore as a Unified DXP

Digital experience suites like Sitecore are focusing on bringing artificial intelligence and machine learning to complement their existing offerings.

Cortex is a machine learning offering from Sitecore that works as an intelligent

assistant to the Sitecore Experience Platform. Cortex is not a separate dashboard or feature in Sitecore. It is an integral part of the Digital Experience Platform enabling AI/ML capabilities within existing features. Automated

personalization, segment/audience discovery, content tagging, and content optimizations are a few advanced marketing capabilities that Cortex offers.

The key components of Cortex and its capabilities are shown below.

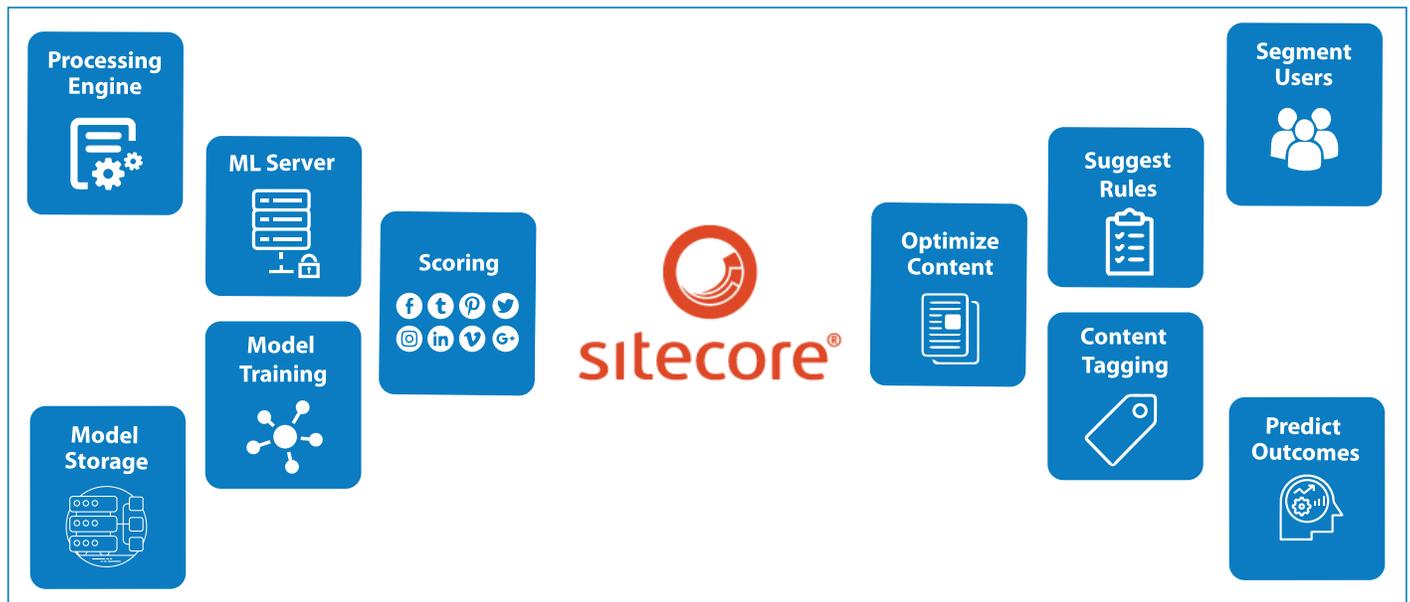


Figure 3 – Key components of Cortex and its capabilities

Sitecore Cortex is built on the Sitecore Experience Database (xDB) which comprises web as well as third party data and generates insights for digital marketers. The processing engine performs distributed processing of data within the Sitecore xDB. It also has built-in storage for the results. Cortex

supports integration with Microsoft Machine Learning Server to bring customer-specific algorithms into the ambit of Sitecore Digital Platform. Its data models can be retrained in the background for better results. All the communications happen through xConnect, the integration layer for xDB.

Cortex helps optimize the customer engagement levers by studying customer interactions and trends. In future, Sitecore aims to enable Cortex to build more efficient customer profiles along with automated content tagging and intelligent recommendations.



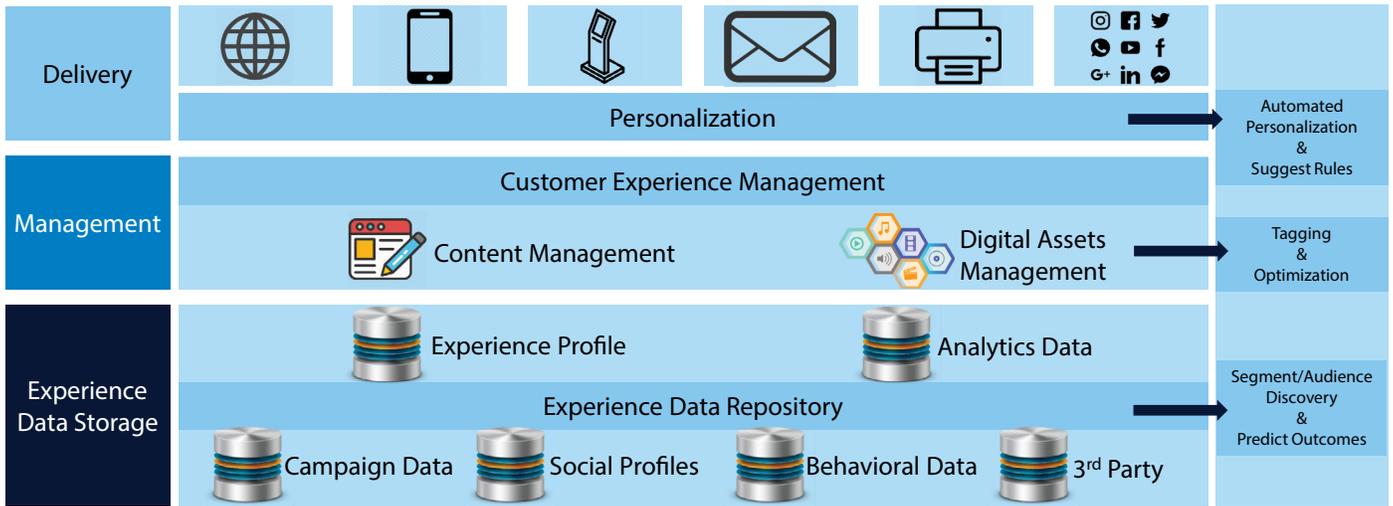


Figure 4 – Role of Cortex in the Sitecore Marketing stack

Sitecore has the advantage of having a mature e-Commerce platform built into the Digital Experience Suite. This allows organizations to build powerful e-Commerce applications with inbuilt capabilities for AI-enabled personalization, product recommendations, and campaigns

Empowering Digital Marketers with AI and ML

Machine learning enabled Digital Experience Platforms will not replace digital marketers. Instead, they will complement and support their activities to drive more effective customer

engagement. Such platforms will be game changers, enabling marketing teams to know their customers better and providing them with the most relevant content to engage more effectively.

Back to Bill: His team has conducted exhaustive research on Sitecore Cortex and is now leveraging its advanced capabilities on their newly transformed Sitecore portal.



The Infosys Advantage

Infosys helps businesses leverage the power of Sitecore Cortex to optimize their content strategy. Infosys is a Sitecore Global Implementation Partner with extensive experience in transforming over 200 customer experience channels. The Infosys Sitecore practice covers the entire spectrum from websites, app development, and multi-lingual implementation to technology migration, Sitecore version upgrades and porting customer experience solutions to the cloud.





Conclusion

Artificial intelligence and machine learning can help digital marketing teams improve the efficiency with which they create and push content to customers. By unlocking valuable insights from customer data, machine learning based solutions drive next-gen capabilities like content optimization, marketing automation, and conversational marketing. Sitecore Cortex leverages AI and ML to further enhance the digital marketing features in Sitecore Experience Platform. Infosys, a Sitecore Global Implementation Partner, assists organizations in reaping the benefits of this next-gen offering and transforming customer experience channels through cloud-first implementations.

About the Author



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Visakh has 21 years of IT and consulting experience in the architecture, definition and design of digital channels. He is Sitecore-certified and has architected several Sitecore-based marketing and dynamic websites. Visakh is an established thought leader who has defined innovative solutions to meet various business needs. He is also part of many technology consulting and architecture assessment groups.

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