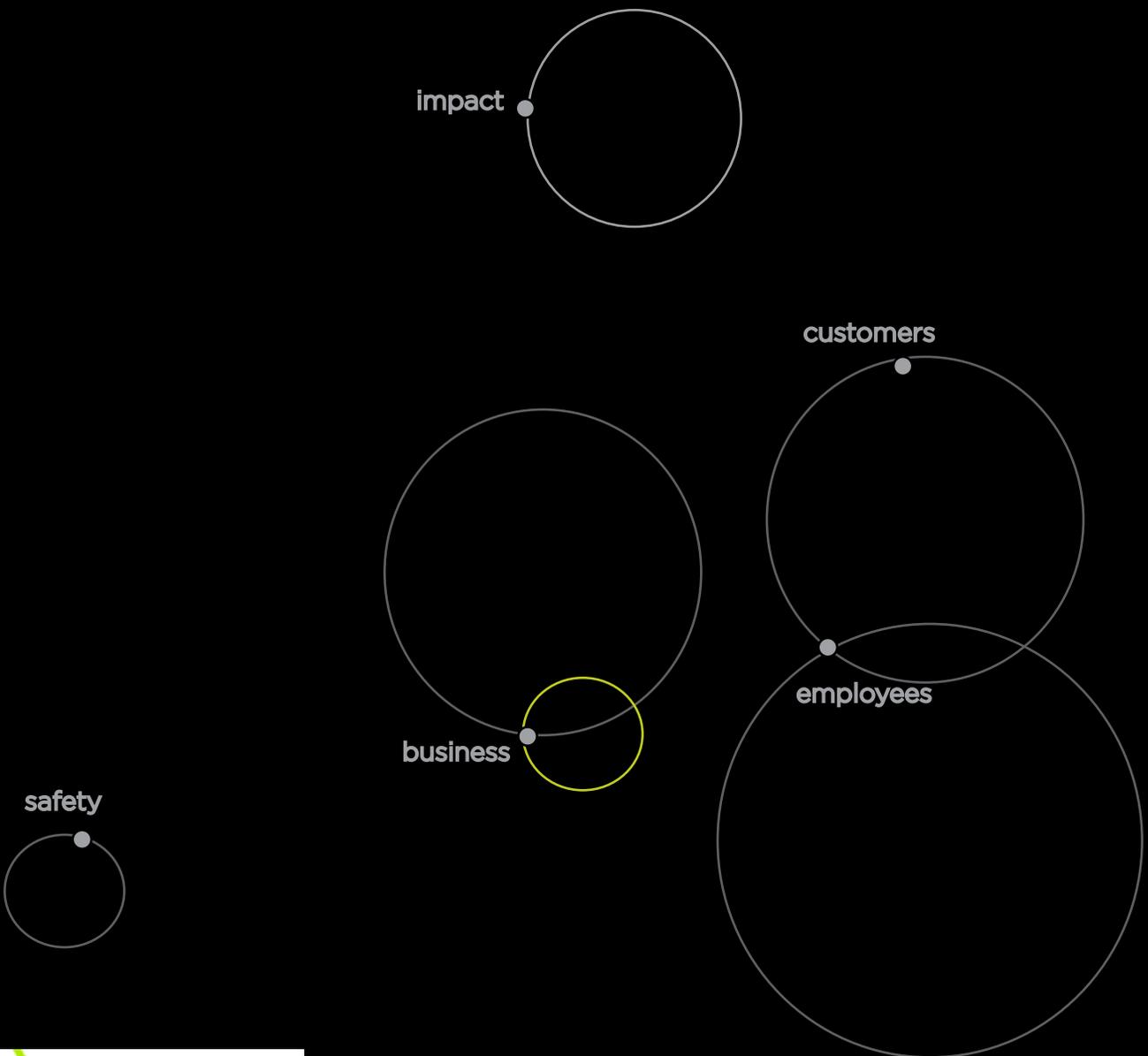


Mass Personalization: How relevance engines are revolutionizing mass communications



Contents

Introduction	3
Personalization: Powered by relevance engines	4
How relevance engines work	5
The value of relevance	5
Relevance engines in action	6
Power of personalization	10

Introduction

Globalization and commoditization continue to ratchet up competitive pressures across all industries, but today's businesses are facing an even more formidable challenge: consumers who want goods and services that meet their unique needs and tastes when it matters most. Over the past decade, many companies have embraced mass customization as a way to differentiate their products and services, giving customers the ability to create everything from the car of their dreams to the perfect pair of jeans. For example, computer makers let customers build their own desktop and laptop systems from a range of components, while insurance companies make it easy for customers to create their own policies from a list of coverage options.

Over the past decade, many companies have embraced mass customization as a way to differentiate their products and services.

Mass customization has enabled a wide variety of businesses to deliver tailored goods and services with the efficiencies provided by mass production. Now another innovation is revolutionizing mass communications and making businesses more efficient and agile: it's called mass personalization.

What if information, products, services or processes could find you - at the very moment you needed them? And, once you are in possession of exactly what you need and want, what if you could also access a system, process a transaction, approve a process or collaborate with others? What if you could also block everything that you don't want or need? That would be a revolution in communication.

Rather than blasting the same message to everyone, imagine if IT could inform just those sales personnel impacted by a server problem that the problem had been resolved? Imagine if marketing could communicate unique messages to the most profitable customers at exactly the right moment? Imagine if a travel services firm could proactively provide alternate travel options to customers stranded by a natural disaster? Mass personalization allows an organization to deliver the right information to the right people at the right time, blocking information they don't want, so they can take appropriate action.

Whereas mass customization usually only benefits customers, mass personalization provides targeted, relevant information to everyone connected with the business - including employees, suppliers, business partners, customers, and potential customers. Mass personalization improves both internal and external communications by addressing the shortcomings of mass communications. Today, if an IT problem arises, an email about the problem may be sent to users around the globe, whether they're impacted or not. Likewise, all customers may receive the same coupon offer, whether they have an interest in the advertised product or not.

Mass personalization eliminates the need to send the same message en masse at the same time. By reducing communication "noise," mass personalization enables recipients to focus on what's relevant to them at the moment that it matters. Organizations can use mass personalization to increase the efficiency of IT and risk management groups, for example, as well as to strengthen customer relationships and accelerate innovation.

Personalization: powered by relevance engines

Effective communication is crucial to every organization, but a number of factors impede the flow of information. One such factor is the global, 24x7 economy, in which employees, suppliers, and customers are often separated by geography, language and time zones. As organizations work to develop and market new products and services, they rely on highly distributed groups of collaborators that require timely, targeted communications to deliver optimal results. Today's mass communication mechanisms often obscure key aspects about relationships and responsibilities among these collaborators, which slows decision-making and provides openings for competitors.

Technology silos are another hurdle to effective communication. The list of systems that keep the enterprise running is long and complex, and includes service and sales support systems, supply chain management, human resources management, and customer relationship management services. The sheer number of these applications and systems can easily overwhelm those involved, making it difficult for them to cull what is relevant from the daily deluge. This complexity also poses challenges for IT and business continuity managers who must be able to identify and respond quickly to problems and minimize service interruptions.

Powered by relevance engines, mass personalization enables organizations to transform vital communications by micro-targeting individuals and groups with timely, relevant information so they can act. A relevance engine is a software or service capability that can be combined with any product or service across all business areas - from IT to risk management to marketing. For example, the xMatters' platform provides enterprises with the ability to use standard application programming interfaces (APIs), domain expertise, and customization to realize benefits from specific relevance engines. To accelerate desired outcomes, relevance engines can be combined with a wide spectrum of enterprise systems, including sales automation systems, continuity planning systems, computer and network management tools, service impact applications, support and help desk systems, change and configuration applications, run-book systems, enterprise scheduling, personnel data sources and human resource systems.

How relevance engines work

A relevance engine is a technical capability that can be added to just about any product or service, connecting people with what matters to them at exactly the right moment. Relevance engines process massive volumes of data and match what is relevant to an individual or a group based on unique attributes, such as: shared interests, responsibilities, permission levels, roles, assignments, availability, location, organization structure, languages, devices, and subscriptions. Recipients can indicate how they want to receive information - for example, by voice, email, or SMS text - and when each delivery mechanism should be used; for example, time of day, day of week, holidays, vacation days, etc. xMatters' relevance engines are technology neutral, and work with applications, devices, and networks that are already in place and support an enterprise's existing processes.

Beyond delivering information, notifications, and choices, relevance engines also give individuals the ability take immediate action. For instance, a relevance engine enables the recipient to collaborate with others; approve a contract; take ownership of an event; make informed decisions during a crisis; or access remote applications and systems. Relevance engines also block what is not relevant, so people receive only what they both want and need.

Relevance engines process massive volumes of data and match what is relevant to an individual or a group based on unique attributes.

The value of relevance

With the help of a relevance engine, companies can improve virtually any product, service, or process and affordably deliver personalized products, services, and experiences to everyone connected with their business. By delivering information, notifications, and choices that matter to the right people at the right time, and enabling them to take immediate action, relevance engines make business processes more effective and help the enterprise function more smoothly, accurately, and intelligently.

A relevance engine delivers the following capabilities:

- Translates unstructured data into structured information according to individual roles, responsibilities, profiles, preferences and other parameters
 - Responds to events, subscriptions, and conditions preselected as important by recipients
 - Provides people with event-relevant notifications, information, choices, and actions depending on their roles, responsibilities, preferences, and availability at the moment that matters
- Optimizes the interplay of people, processes and information
 - Gives people the ability to take action, such as accessing a system, purchasing a product, or approving a business process or event
 - Blocks notifications, information and options that recipients indicate are not relevant to them

By using relevance engines, enterprises can:

- Extract greater value from existing applications
- Capture and make better use of information that already exists in the organization
- Keep the business up and running, ensuring employee safety, at all times
- Improve the quality and desirability of their products and services
- Grow customer satisfaction, retention and loyalty

Relevance engines in action

xMatters has developed relevance engines that can improve a wide range of business processes through the targeted delivery of relevant information that can be acted on. Enterprises can immediately benefit from the use of xMatters' relevance engines in four key areas: IT services, risk management, customer service and new product innovation.

Relevance engines help IT become an innovation partner within the enterprise by fostering closer alignment with business needs.

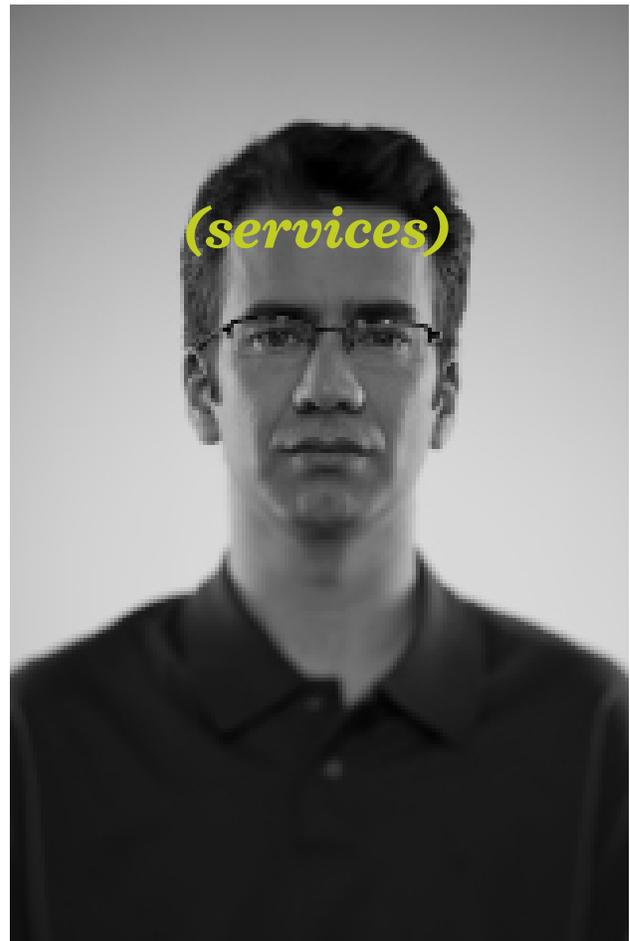
IT Services

IT organizations are constantly asked to do more with less. Imagine if the IT department could deliver maximum uptime at minimum cost, ensuring that IT services are available to the business and that business services are available to customers with the five 9s of reliability? Relevance engines can make IT service delivery more efficient and reliable by automating critical tasks; expediting problem ownership and resolution; providing real-time visibility into outcomes; and accelerating decision making and approval cycles.

xMatters created multiple relevance engines to address the needs of IT services departments, including: xMatters (*alarmpoint*) engine; xMatters (*help desk*) engine; xMatters (*change*) engine; xMatters (*incident*) engine; xMatters (*service provider*) engine; and xMatters (*operations*) engine. These relevance engines have helped numerous large IT organizations boost service uptime and cut support costs.

For example, by using a relevance engine to target information to the right person, General Electric has accelerated incident response times by 85 percent. On average, work groups close tickets 35 percent faster, with an average savings of 30 minutes per alert. Similarly, through the use of relevance engines, Carfax has cut the staff needed to resolve each incident by 80 percent by eliminating mass alerting that caused confusion, poor communication, and delayed the resolution of IT events.

In addition to helping IT departments boost productivity and up time, relevance engines also help IT become an innovation partner within the enterprise by fostering closer alignment with business needs.



Risk management

When an event occurs that impacts business – from a natural disaster to a product recall – the risk management team needs to respond immediately to maximize safety and ensure business continuity. But how can an enterprise deliver information to those who are affected without alarming those who are not?

Relevance engines improve business continuity and accelerate recovery, ensuring the business will continue to function smoothly despite a crisis.

The xMatters (*risk*) engine, xMatters (*business continuity*) engine, and xMatters (*disaster recovery*) engine provide visibility into critical areas of an organization and enable risk management teams to send relevant information to the people affected, making a complex notification problem simple and straightforward. With these relevance engines, organizations can access, share, and monitor critical information across the organization in real time. Authorized individuals can make decisions and take action from remote locations – via mobile phone, email or otherwise.

In addition, a relevance engine allows organizations to send ongoing, targeted communications to all of the people affected by a crisis, including employees, customers, vendors, partners, and neighbors, letting them know what is happening, how it affects them, and what actions they should take right now. By combining a relevance engine with other risk management systems, enterprises can:

- Minimize loss
- Provide visibility into critical business functions to all stakeholders
- Communicate quickly and effectively to those who need to know

- Ensure safety of employees, customers and others who may be affected
- Safeguard their reputation and lower brand exposure
- Remain compliant with legal and regulatory guidelines.

A leading grocery chain uses a relevance engine to handle product recalls, while the Denver International Airport uses a relevance engine to notify people of sudden and severe weather, security breaches, dispatch snow plows and other events that impact travelers, airlines, businesses within the airport, and overall airport operations. Relevance engines improve business continuity and accelerate recovery, ensuring that a business will continue to function smoothly despite a crisis.



Customer Contact

Every business faces the ongoing challenge of how to attract, retain and create more loyal and profitable customers. Research shows that acquiring a customer costs 5 to 10 times more than retaining one; repeat customers spend 67 percent more, on average; and that a mere 20 percent of customers account for 80 percent of total revenues. What if an organization could differentiate itself by connecting with customers in ways that add value and deepen loyalty?

Relevance engines boost customer loyalty by giving customers personalized attention, which helps build trust, loyalty and brand value.

Interacting with customers via telephone, IM, or email is valuable, but it can also be expensive and time-consuming. Relevance engines let organizations use mass personalization to communicate with customers on a one-on-one basis more efficiently. With the xMatters (*growth*) engine, organizations can easily and affordably engage with customers in real-time, sending them information and offers relevant at that moment; enabling them to take action, such as making a purchase or taking advantage of a limited offer; and receiving valuable feedback about what they want. A relevance engine also lets customers subscribe to the information they want – such as service usage or product updates – turning them from passive consumers into active participants.

For example, Vodafone uses a relevance engine to send targeted information to their customers based on the kinds of services they subscribe to, targeting information to each user based on the service they use, their role, and how they utilize the service. As a result, customer retention rates are up, and feedback is positive.

Relevance engines boost customer loyalty by:

- Giving customers personalized attention, which helps build trust, loyalty and brand value
- Reach customers wherever they are right now
- Resolve customer concerns before they turn into problems
- Uncover customer habits, patterns, and choices
- Provide a competitive advantage by cultivating active, responsive customer engagement.



Innovative Product Development

To thrive in today's business environment, enterprises need to get to market fast and deliver products, services, and experiences that customers value. What if the product development team could know with certainty what matters to their customers right now?

A relevance engine enables companies to address changing customer requirements and bring innovative products and services to market faster.

Adding a relevance engine into product planning and development cycles opens up new ways to engage with customers, partners, and prospects. A relevance engine can accelerate the time it takes to bring new products and services to market in various ways--for example, by embedding new technologies into existing products; automating non value-added processes; and capturing customer interactions and behaviors to refine R&D on new projects.

One global healthcare solutions provider used relevance engines to transform an existing patient care system from a static tool geared to medical professionals to a highly interactive tool that provides unique views for doctors, nurses, and other medical staff as well as patients. As a result, medical staff and patients get relevant information when they need it, which helps improve medical care, reduce errors, and increase patient cooperation and engagement. With the relevance engine in place, the company was able to collect key information and feedback from medical providers as well as patients and use this to improve its products, gaining a significant competitive advantage with minimal effort or investment.

A relevance engine can:

- Extend the life of existing products and services
- Shorten product development cycles
- Reduce R&D spending
- Provide new ways for customers to engage
- Enable companies to innovate to meet changing customer needs and wants

By providing the ability to continuously gather information and validate what matters to customers, a relevance engine enables companies to rapidly address changing customer requirements and bring innovative products and services to market faster.



The power of personalization

Relevance engines enable enterprises to cut through the noise created by mass communication by connecting people with what they need to know and do at exactly the right moment. What matters to people changes from minute to minute, hour to hour, and day to day – which sounds like an impossible problem to solve – but xMatters' relevance engines are designed to meet this challenge. With the help of a relevance engine, businesses can transform their products, services and processes by:

- Matching individuals to the events, subscriptions and conditions that matter to them at a given moment
- Delivering information and choices depending on parameters such as an individual's roles, responsibilities, preferences, and availability
- Connecting individuals with the people, processes, and applications they need to take effective action

About xMatters

In with the new

If you knew us as AlarmPoint, you may be wondering what changed. The short answer is: we're still doing what we did before; only now we're helping entire organizations become more aware and responsive. We still offer the same quality solutions you've come to expect, like alert management products, but we've realized that what businesses need most is relevance: a way to connect people with what matters to them, at exactly the right moment. A relevance engine completes the last mile of IT service delivery and makes businesses more effective, more agile, and more competitive. Right now.

By combining xMatters relevance engines with existing applications and systems, enterprises can make internal operations, such as IT services and risk management, more efficient, reliable, accountable and less costly. Relevance engines also enable businesses to connect with customers in new ways and use mass personalization to provide individualized attention and build brand value by delivering what their customers want, when they want it.

In addition to extending the life of existing products and services, xMatters relevance engines help organizations turn information into innovation, shorten development cycles, and reduce R&D spending. With xMatters, businesses can reap the benefits of mass personalization and maintain a competitive edge.

xMatters

xMatters builds relevance engines that connect people with what they need to know at exactly the right moment – so they can take immediate action. Our relevance engines work with existing enterprise applications, technologies, and processes to help businesses run faster and smarter. Over 800 global firms use xMatters to make their products and services more valuable, both internally and to their customers and shareholders. Founded in 2000 as AlarmPoint Systems, xMatters is headquartered in Pleasanton, CA with European operations based in Woking, U.K. More information is available at www.xmatters.com or call +1 925 251 5720 US, +44 (0) 1483 722 001 UK.