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Magical Moments at Scale

A man leaves an opened bottle of wine in his hotel room accompanied by a note to the hotel staff asking for them not to throw it away. He comes back to find it where he left it with a note stating, "No problem, and here's another bottle on us – enjoy!" At this point, the man likes the hotel. One year later, the man returns to the same hotel brand but in a different city. When he walks into his room, he finds a bottle of wine waiting for him on the side table. It's the right brand.

The concept of thoughtfulness is undoubtedly something we can all understand, but what does this concept mean for a business? How can a business be thoughtful as it caters to its customers? In the case of the man at the hotel, the act of not only paying attention to his request but also remembering his preference years later pushes thoughtfulness to the next level — creating a magical moment for the man that forms a connection between himself and the hotel brand.

This concept leads to some questions. Is every company capable of providing a magical moment? Can the magical moment be replicated at scale? If so, how?

We've identified three components that unlock how you can replicate magical moments at scale. The three components: **data, AI, and art**, when combined, make producing scalable magical moments a reality.

Data

By leveraging a moment created for an individual customer, businesses produce sets of discrete data creating a trail of breadcrumbs to find not just one magical moment, but many. How companies identify, collect and organize this data is paramount. This can expedite not only learning what their customers are looking for, but also predicting what they don't yet realize they are seeking.

AI

With robust data collected around the experiences and interactions of a customer, companies can deploy effective AI techniques to surface the breadcrumbs of a user's unique needs, desires and goals. This can be taken a step further by augmenting it with expanded data sets to create next-level personalization. This can, in turn, offer targeted predictive information, personalized services, or even a deeper understanding of current customer needs.

Art

While data and AI get the praise, these magical moments don't exist without a creative element. This is the art component; it is the x-factor that creates the magic.

The wine, its brand, and the man's affinity towards it are all data points ready to be utilized. But they are no more than data. It is the craft of the marketer to use this data to create something unique and memorable for the customer, and this requires creativity. The hotel could have communicated how they stored the man's wine preference in his file, sent him a nice email, let him know at check-in, etc., and all of this would have produced delightful little moments. However, the hotel went a step further. They looked toward the future and, with empathetic foresight, envisioned a moment when the man—likely exhausted from a long flight—enters his room to be happily surprised by a thoughtful touch.

Companies that can leverage and combine data, AI, and art will be able to uncover their magical moments and grow them with their customers. And in doing so, they will ensure their customers feel heard, understood and valued.

The man goes down to the hotel lobby to speak to the front desk. He thanks the concierge for their thoughtful touch. They reply, "Our pleasure! By the way, we know you like the Vin Santo del Chianti to finish off the work week...may we recommend Lindt Excellence Supreme Dark Chocolate to pair with it...this one has received rave reviews from a fellow wine connoisseur."