



GDPR: Taking the fear out of data to enhance customer experience

How exemplary data governance is an opportunity to get closer to your customers
By Jat Sahi, Digital Lead Retail and Hospitality EMEA at Fujitsu

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The media have created a climate of fear over GDPR.

At Fujitsu, we don't believe the hype. And nor should you. GDPR is a step forward. It gives individuals the right to have more control of how their personal data is used. That places responsibilities on organizations across all sectors, public and private. If you see GDPR as an opportunity to cleanse and rationalize your data, then you can use it to enrich the customer experience and engender trust – and see huge benefits.

Jat Sahi challenges you to see GDPR as an opportunity.



GDPR: Time to
embrace the
opportunity



Focus on what
makes data
valuable



GDPR makes
mission and
empathy critical
not optional



Know thy data



Engage the
customer and
think ahead



GDPR: Time to embrace the opportunity

GDPR will force organizations to change the way they manage personal data. It shifts power from the organization to the individual. We all have a much greater say in how our data is collected, stored and used.

That's a significant challenge for every organization, public or private, large or small. Especially retail, which is where I spend most of my time. New regulations are never popular, and many decision makers focus on the downsides, such as likely increased costs for compliance and potential fines for breaches. A few retailers are even deciding to give-up collecting the data that allows them to know their customers, which is a short-term view; it places much a greater risk on their livelihoods as well as just pushing the risk out a few quarters!

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Focus on what makes data valuable

Some organizations are worried that there'll be a huge rise in requests from customers to examine their personal data. That will cost money. And there are already firms trying to re-heat their 'no-win-no-fee' business model to encourage citizens to put in data requests in the hope of getting compensation for misuse of their data.

Personal data is key to achieving engagement with customers on the right terms. The data reveals what customers do, what they might need, (or be persuaded to want) and how this is changing. It is critical in being able to satisfy and delight them. Without the data you'll just be guessing.

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GDPR makes mission and empathy critical not optional

The 'no-win-no-fee' operators will tell your customers that you're a big and amoral corporate beast sucking up all their personal data, so you can exploit them and take advantage of them. They will, no doubt, grab any newsworthy example of a misbehaving organization and turn it into a prime-time show which will damage trust in similar brands further.

Trust is the basis of any deep and long-term relationship. It is a foundational element of good customer experience, engagement and loyalty. Why should customers trust you when you're only answerable to your shareholders based on the share-price? You need to find, validate and deeply ingrain a sense of positive mission in the world and empathy for their purposes. Only then will customers start to trust you with their data. Just ask Mark Zuckerberg!

Empathy can refocus your business so that you are much closer to your customers. This new relationship can drive a journey that asks for data points to lead to the development of new propositions. That will help overcome what I believe is a big problem for many businesses: a fear of GDPR that leads organizations to look inward and favor data over people. Our mission in the world forces us to look outwards and understand people.

Working on being compliant with GDPR will help you build trust. It will demonstrate that you respect your customers' personal data and privacy. And that you do everything possible to manage and protect it. You are actively empowering your customers to take control of what data is collected, stored and used.

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Know thy data

Many businesses don't know what data they have, why they have it, where it's located, and how it's being used. That's not just bad in terms of compliance with GDPR (or any data protection regulations), but it's also a waste of resources, a lost opportunity and maybe most importantly an invisible, unreported reputational risk.

GDPR is a great reason to clean house. You can find out what you have, get rid of any redundant, out of date or trivial data, and then organize the data you've identified as valuable or necessary so that you store it safely and in an organized secure way. That saves time and money, and speeds your business thinking and decision making. It also means that when you get a subject access request you can respond to it quickly and efficiently for the least possible cost.

GDPR is an opportunity to turn HiPPO's into Scientists so everyone makes better decisions

As a part of cleaning house critical questions will be asked about the value of data and how it is used (or not!). This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to educate the organization on data, why not make the most of it? Most businesses are still run on the Highest Paid Person's Opinion – HiPPO's, but increasingly data led organizations are pulling away from the pack.

In retail for example Shop Direct/Very, with their background in direct mail catalogs, have always had a data-led culture and a strong understanding of its value across the business. That's enabled them to maximize the opportunities of new data sources from mobile, web and other sources. They use empirical evidence, trials and data to make better decisions and optimize their organization. It's why they are still doing well at a time when so many retailers are continuing to struggle.

In fact, GDPR is an amazing opportunity to educate the entire organization on the value of data and begin catching-up with the leaders. It's a big opportunity. The spur that many organizations need to get on top of their data which is, as I've stressed, a valuable resource.

What you're really after is creating what could be called 'a golden record' for every customer. The right data in the right place. It's accurate, easily accessible, and available to both the business and the data subject. It's both compliant and efficient.

We all know what it's like to get mailouts through our door addressed to people who moved on decades ago. Each letter costs money. It also suggests that the business which sent it is inefficient. They obviously don't update their records. It gets worse when special offers are sent out to people who are deceased. Inaccurate data leads to waste and, more importantly, reputational damage. GDPR gives you a very good reason to cleanse the data, cut duplication, and create that 'golden record'. A great place to start getting there (but remember it's only the start!) is with a fixed price GDPR readiness assessment to evaluate your compliance gaps and roadmap of recommendations.



Engage the customer and think ahead

Give customers control over their personal data. Engage them in a dialogue about how they want their data to be used and give them choices. That's a whole new way of building a relationship with your customers. It enhances their experience of your brand, and builds loyalty.

You need to build a valid and empathetic reason about which personal data you need, and which don't. A good way to start is with the 'Mum Test' = it's a very human way to test the validity of what you collect. If you explain to your mother what data you want to collect and what you will do with it and why, and she understands it, then it's likely most people will understand too.

Remember anonymized data can deliver valuable insights for broader segments, markets, products or customer trends. Personal data is useful for direct engagement and, for instance, sensing out personalized offers or providing specific services. It's a balance you need to strike.

Simply, you need to think about the business value of the personal data you collect. Don't ask for data you don't really need. Get the data that counts and leads to deeper engagement with your customer.

So, take the GDPR opportunity to take total control of your data, educate your organization about data, connect empathically with your customers and enhance your customer experience.

What to do next:

Discover how we can help you run a GDPR assessment.



[Find out more](#)

Engage with us at one of our new Digital Transformation Centers (we're opening them in major cities around the world) where we will work with you to apply our unique Human Centric Experience Design approach to help you master customer experience. If you aren't near a center, we can bring the entire methodology to you.



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Contact details

Ask Fujitsu
+44 (0) 123 579 7711
askfujitsu@uk.fujitsu.com
#EnablingDigital
Ref: 3842

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