ACTIONIQ ✕ Vera Bradley

Case Study

Vera Bradley Returns to Growth with **Transformational Vision**

———

Summary

- Vera Bradley embarked on multi-year customer-centric business transformation

- Combined people and process with modern technology to become data-informed

- With CDP in place, the brand was able to optimize spend, increase LTV, and drive sales

BACKGROUND

Vera Bradley is an internationally recognized lifestyle brand best known for its signature line of quilted-cotton luggage, handbags, and accessories. The company drives approximately $500mm dollars in annual revenue across more than 2,300 retail locations.

In 2018, Vera Bradley began to lay a new foundation for growth and a more profitable future—seeking to achieve a significant transformation of its business by 2021. The strategy included emphasizing full-value sales of its most desirable items aimed at the company's most valuable clientele.

Daren Hull was brought in as Chief Customer Officer to lead Vera Bradley's transformation. With prior experience at Williams-Sonoma, PepsiCo, Amazon and L'Oreal, Hull came with years of data-driven personalization experience.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Customer data sat at the core of the company's personalization strategy. But it wasn't about just collecting customer data, it was about how to use that data to drive business transformation.

We have a focus to provide an excellent experience for customers—and that's where a CDP comes in. 🙳

DAREN HULL
CCO, VERA BRADLEY

"Where I focus my time is not just in having customer data, but in how to democratize that data across the organization and into the hands of the high-quality teams both internally and in the field," says Hull. "We have a focus to improve CSAT and NPS score, but most importantly to really provide an excellent experience for customers—and that's where a CDP comes in."

With responsibility for the company's revenue channels including sales and marketing, as well as the company's customer data team, Hull had a broad remit to drive innovation.

THE CHALLENGE

Like many established brands, Vera Bradley's customer data was spread across hundreds of IT jobs and reports. While these reports provided important operational insights for the company, they were difficult to maintain and were not built for marketers. This meant marketers could not self-service their own insights or audiences, which significantly impacted how quickly they could iterate and optimize their campaigns.

For instance, Vera Bradley wanted to optimize marketing spend to increase the quality, not just quantity, of the new customers they were acquiring. This required identifying which customer behaviors influenced LTV and then running omnichannel experiments to measure business impact. The current IT-driven process was no longer sustainable—they needed a new approach.

THE SOLUTION

The CDP is really important for us because it helps **spread the analytics workload**, especially the ad hoc work, into the hands of the business teams. "

According to Hull, "The first challenge was to unify silos of data by putting the customer at the center and looking at all the interactions in a channel-agnostic way." With ActionIQ, Vera Bradley was able to unify and access their customer data in a single platform; which enabled Hull to bring customer experience expertise in-house. This not only increased the speed at which they could deliver new campaigns, but also solidified the brand's institutional capabilities around customer-centricity. "The CDP is really important for us because it helps spread the analytics workload, especially the ad hoc work, into the hands of the business teams," says Hull, "which creates a much more sustainable model for everyone working with customer data."

Silos were not limited to IT and marketing systems at Vera Bradley. They also existed across teams. Putting the customer at the center of every interaction meant re-aligning the organization. "We don't want our org chart getting in the way of someone having a great experience," says Hull. With a strong change management plan in place, Vera Bradley was able to design its processes around the customer and empower its people to deliver superior customer experiences.

ACTIONIQ

VERA BRADLEY'S CDP IN ACTION

USE CASE	CAPABILITY	RESULT
Optimize Marketing Spend	• Unify behavioral and transactional customer data • Leverage machine learning to model high LTV customer attributes and audiences • Orchestrate and measure experiences across all customer channels	• Lift in marketing funnel conversion rate and value • YOY conversion improvement enabling more focus on top-of-funnel growth initiative • Contribution to a double-digit increase in YOY customer count
Increase Customer LTV	• Connect customer events to product attributes • Analyze expected long-term value of next-best-item to go beyond solely transaction value • Score and recommend items by propensity to deliver engagement over the long term	• Contributed to a 8% lift in CSAT in a single quarter • Increase in customer traffic and sales resulting from improved CSAT
Drive Brick-and-Mortar Sales	• Link regional store color, pattern, and style trends to customer demographics • Expose trend data to store associates to provide more consultative and engaging experiences for customers	• Moved pilot store from poorest performer to one of the best performers in the chain

aws

ActionIQ is built on Amazon Web Services, enabling our customers to deliver authentic customer experiences with unmatched speed, scale and resilience.

THE TRANSFORMATION FRAMEWORK

Apply Vera Bradley's transformation framework and best practices to your organization.

Set your vision

- Set small goals with strict deadlines/constraints, and then hit them.

- Focus on what is actually important, and find new ways to solve those problems.

- Articulate the "what you want" simply:

  We want a [thing] **that allows** [customer group] **to** [benefit] **by** [method]

Decide where to start

[name] **will be the personalization sponsor/champion for my team**

[product/service] **drives profitability at the company**

[channel] **is most impactful in creating a positive experience**

[metric] **matters most to us**

Plan for the future

A CDP is really a start line, not a finish line. 🙰

"We are still undergoing this evolution and we are expanding personalization of messages—it is all very encouraging and exciting," says Hull. In the near term, Vera Bradly seeks to deepen its use of customer data to drive great customer experiences and intelligently deploy marketing spend, all at scale.

➡️

Setup time with a CDP expert to learn more about how to transform your organization to become more customer-centric.

About ActionIQ

ActionIQ empowers the world's leading brands to win in today's experience economy by building deeper, more valuable relationships with their customers. Our real-time orchestration and intelligence hub, powered by the fastest and most scalable customer data platform, enables marketers to quickly turn disconnected customer data into personalized experiences, orchestrated across all channels in real-time. The New York Times, Pandora, Gap Inc., WW, and more, trust ActionIQ to differentiate their brands, drive lasting customer loyalty, and significantly improve business performance — achieving up to a 20% increase in revenue in just a few months.

To learn more, visit **actioniq.com**

Contact Us

🐦	twitter.com/actioniqinc	🖥	www.actioniq.com
f	facebook.com/actioniq	✉	contact@actioniq.com
in	linkedin.com/company/actioniq	📍	50 W 23rd Street, STE 6A New York, NY 10010
		📞	(347) 709 8880