Alium CDP Report Q2

2025

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The Real CDP Landscape

This report reveals the truth about what brands want in a CDP and how they think about CDPs based on their unique needs.

In talking to hundreds of brands, we have discovered two important elements that drive the CDP market:

- **CDPs need to cater to a wide variety of use cases**
- **Marketers look for solutions across a huge range of vendors**

Because of these two facts, CDPs do not fit neatly into a vendor bucket. Vendors that call themselves CDPs make up only a small portion of the list of vendors that brands actually identify as their CDP.

In our interviews brands called out 57 unique vendors as their "CDP"

We've found that the reasons for using CDPs vary widely. And the different use cases dramatically alter the vendors that marketers choose to work with.

This report explores the use cases and the vendors that brands actually use as their CDP and uncovers the reasons why the CDP market is misunderstood and significantly more broad than it appears.

The Trouble With CDPs

The CDP might be the most misunderstood and hated technologies in the modern martech stack. But, CDPs are also one of the most significant - a foundational technology. Across our 700+ brand interviews, 276 discuss "CDP."

Despite their ubiquity, brands give CDPs low ratings. The average Alium Satisfaction Score for any company that our brand interviewees identify as a CDP is 6.72. That's significantly lower than the average rating of 7.02 across all vendors in our platform.

CDPs get a bad rap for several reasons that they can't help. Assembling a clean, usable customer database is difficult, complicated and costly. Few companies have the resources and the resolve to do it well. As important as the CDP is to the martech stack, it is frustrating to use one. Many marketers question the value of their implementation.

Marketers do not love CDPs. In our recent A-List report that highlighted the 20 most beloved martech and ecommerce vendors, none have a primary use case as a CDP.

Take it from marketers:

"Prior places I've worked have done pilots on like a CDP and never really got anywhere. What ends up happening is that a lot of these CDPs try and then not much really comes out of it just because of the data wiring challenges."**- Sysco**

"I think that it's been kind of a pretty painful implementation and the value we've gotten out of it, I'm not going to say is non-existent, but I thought it would go a lot smoother than this to be quite honest. But maybe I was too optimistic."**- HelloFresh**

"It is a little bit like a Lego set without an instruction manual."**- Hanesbrands**

"We recently canceled our CDP contract because we were just really doing very minimal things with it. We were sending audiences to Facebook and Google and that was basically it."**- America's Test Kitchen**

Despite the difficulty brands have with CDPs, the market is robust and remains a necessary part of marketing and ecommerce technology.

Start With Use Cases

Deciding which technology to use as a CDP is a lot more complicated than picking between the dozen or so big vendors who are officially placed in the "CDP" bucket. With 57 vendors to choose from, brands need a different approach.

Our interviews have identified that it's much more effective to identify the use case that matters most. The use case that brands are focused on has a dramatic effect on the vendor selection.

Top Use Cases:
- Customer communications
- Identity resolution
- Customer segmentation

CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS

The more a brand knows about their customer, the more relevant their communication can be. The more complete a customer record is across all touchpoints, the more effective brands can be at communicating at the right time and place. CDPs are designed to house a "golden record" and to help brands build out customer profiles.

"The biggest opportunity I see is powering those personalized communications and really creating a relationship between the marketing communications and the product activity... Being able to have that two-way street."
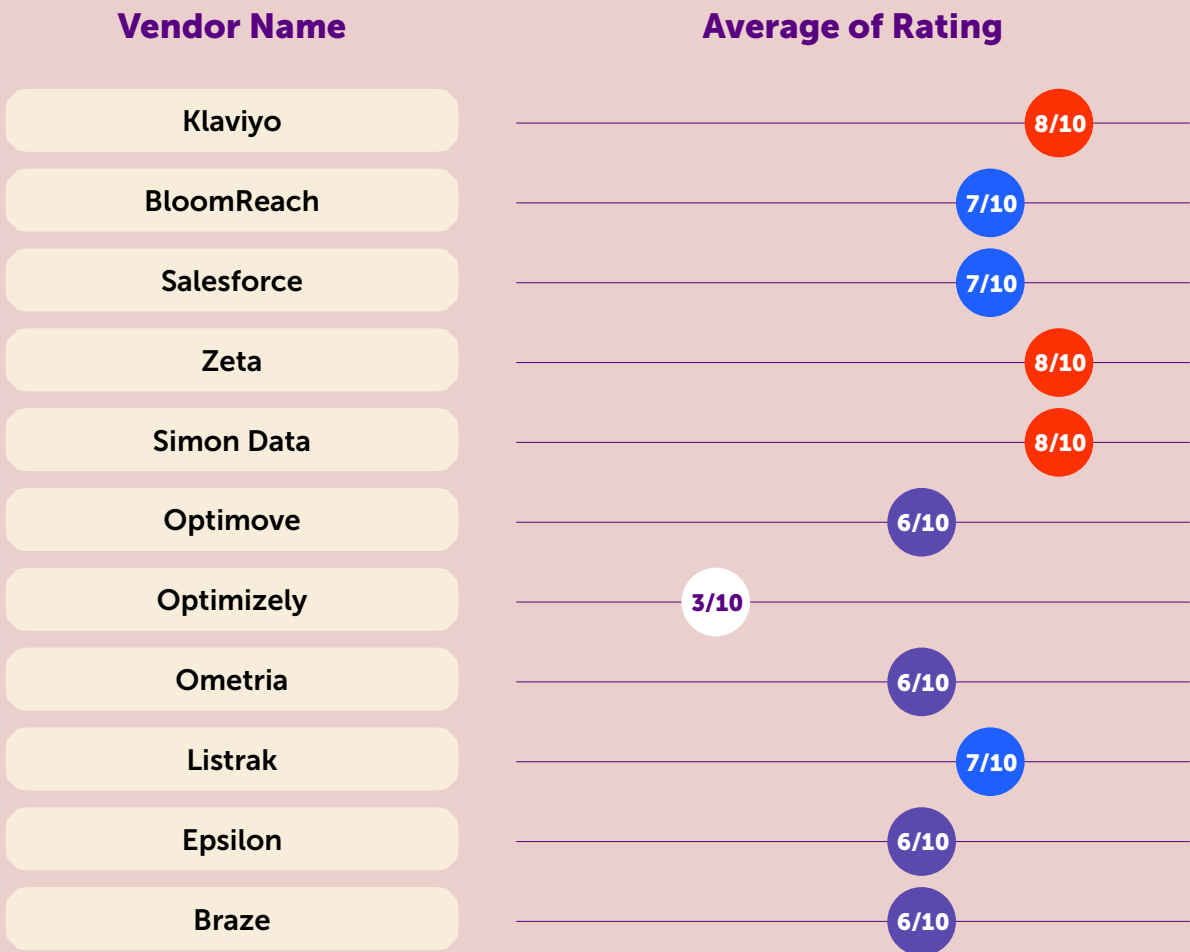
America's Test Kitchen

"Dynamic content is essential as we build emails in eight core languages and swap messages depending on the recipient's location and status. We plan to enhance how we engage guests by managing preferences through a unified CDP and ESP."

Hyatt

"Personalization is central to our digital transformation, not just in building data platforms but in truly utilizing that data. Clients expect tailored experiences, desiring interactions that reflect their specific needs and preferences. Instead of broad promotions, targeted ones based on individual preferences yield better results. Personalization, combined with AI and data from our CDP, empowers us to create tailored strategies, optimizing experiences for clients and, in turn, boosting our revenue."

Nieman Marcus

Vendor Name	Average of Rating
Klaviyo	8/10
BloomReach	7/10
Salesforce	7/10
Zeta	8/10
Simon Data	8/10
Optimove	6/10
Optimizely	3/10
Ometria	6/10
Listrak	7/10
Epsilon	6/10
Braze	6/10

Vendors also listed Netcore Cloud, Marigold, Iterable, HubSpot, Emarsys, Cordial, Blueshift, Adobe for this use case.

IDENTITY RESOLUTION

Resolving data across platforms and devices makes it possible to do many things from more effective personalization to cross-device campaign orchestration. Matching huge, imperfect data files is incredibly complicated. Most brands are not fully mature at identity resolution and use a variety of different vendors to piece together customer identity.

"We store data in the member portal, Snowflake, and Salesforce, but they don't always integrate well. Marketing only accesses limited Salesforce data, restricting campaign insights and effectiveness. The manual processes currently needed for data queries slow down operations. Identity resolution remains challenging as we face difficulties linking unique user journeys across platforms. Overall, better integration is necessary to streamline data handling and access. Due to isolated data systems, we struggle with identity resolution. We also face challenges recognizing individuals across our systems, which impacts customer service. Implementing a CDP could address these issues, though we have yet to move forward with a solution."

SmithRX

"We have tried with Amperity, didn't really go anywhere. I think the latest attempt has been, from what I understand, Data Cloud is supposed to be a CDP, again, just I don't understand the marketing versus the reality. I'd love somebody from Salesforce to actually educate me what that thing even is. But at some point it was a CDP then now I think we made a similar attempt and then it is like, well, but yeah, but it's not really a CDP either. So you actually can't do identity resolution, you can't do duplicate elimination, you can't do all these things. So I'm honestly confused in that space and I'm not aware that there's people able to do things."

Sysco

"While every CDP might claim to have basic ID resolution, they are mostly just stitching IDs, rather than truly resolving identities tied to PII. In my perspective, there's a difference between what CDPs are doing and the validation accuracy provided by entities like Axiom. Although the idea of identifying anonymous traffic is intriguing, I don't engage in this because consumers haven't given consent."

Levi's

Vendor Name	Average of Rating
Amperity	7/10
Twilio Segment	7/10
BloomReach	5/10

Vendors also listed Zeta, Simon Data, SessionM, Listrak, BlueConic for this use case.

CUSTOMER SEGMENTATION

CDPs provide the raw customer data that brands need for creating segments. In most cases, the segmentation happens in the CDP, a file is created and then sent over to another platform where it can be activated over email, mobile, or on the site.

"We use it for audience building, segmentation, and cutting of flat files from points A to B to power our campaigns for all our brands. For example, when my team is told by Athleta, "We have a campaign going out this week," we grab all those people that qualify. A CDP has a lot of different use cases, but for Gap specifically, it is a place for our data warehouse to be accessed. We use it to segment our customers and activate them into different channels."
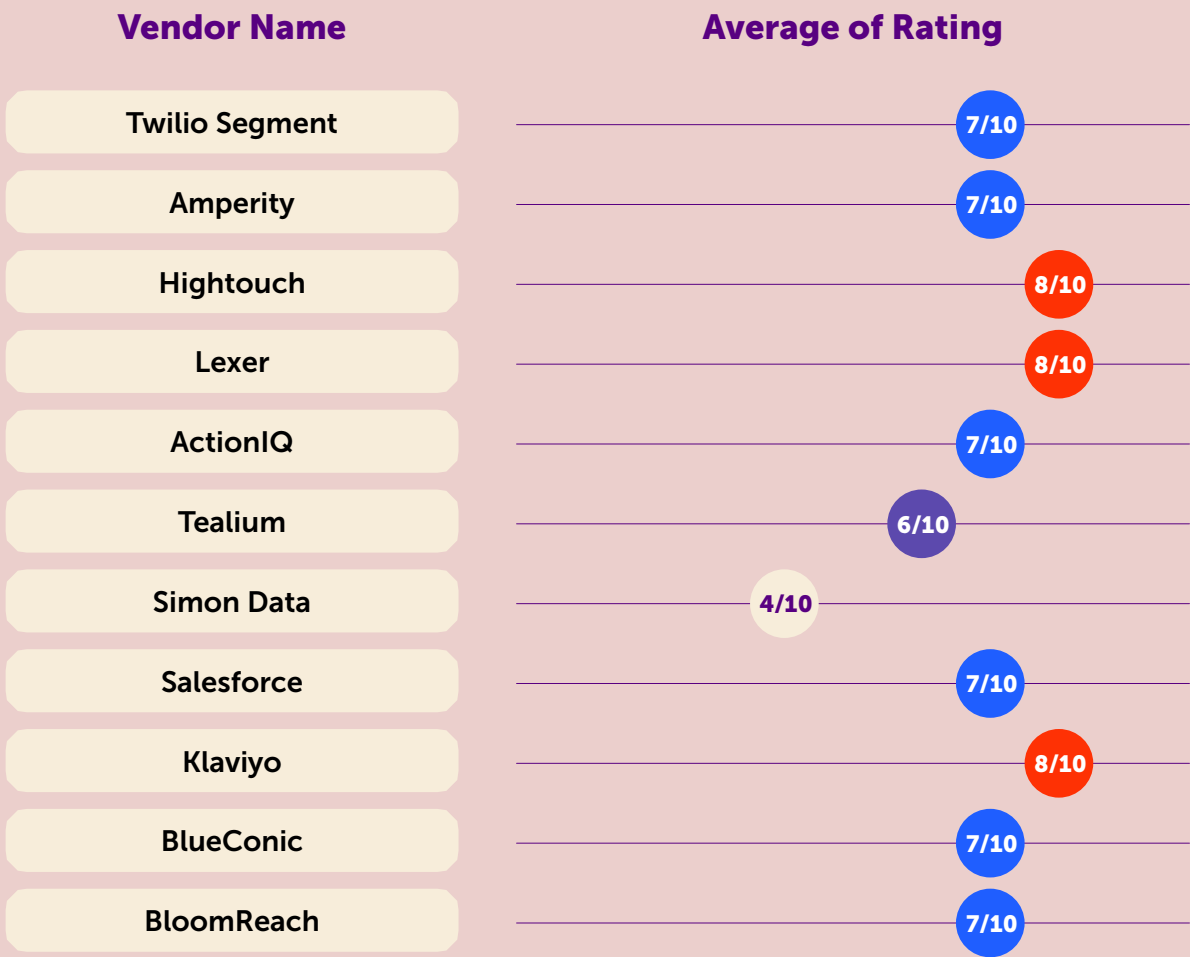
GAP

"We use Snowflake as the repository for all our data. It complements Amperity, which we use for actionable insights and segmentation. The integration allows us to run queries and tailor marketing strategies based on customer preferences. This setup enhances data accessibility and decision-making across teams."

Brooks Brothers

"Over the next 12-18 months, I want to focus on more personalized segmentation for loyalty members, deploying a CDP, and revising our media approach and strategy. We need to understand our customers better and tailor our communications to their specific needs. The CDP will help us organize and utilize data efficiently."

Smoothie King

Vendor Name	Average of Rating
Twilio Segment	7/10
Amperity	7/10
Hightouch	8/10
Lexer	8/10
ActionIQ	7/10
Tealium	6/10
Simon Data	4/10
Salesforce	7/10
Klaviyo	8/10
BlueConic	7/10
BloomReach	7/10

Vendors also listed Treasure Data, Redpoint Global, Bikky, Adobe, Acquia for this use case.

ABOUT ALIUM

Brand leaders rely on Alium to get the unedited truth from their peers about the technologies that drive results. Alium's peer-led vendor research is created from comprehensive buyer conversations that are analyzed and synthesized by AI. Brands gain actionable intelligence to find the right partner for their needs. Vendors use Alium to better understand their position in the market, get product feedback, and understand enterprise purchase cycles.

METHODOLOGY:

The Alium CDP report is a guide for buyers of enterprise technology solutions and is 100% based on the opinions of the brands we interview. Unlike buying guides from analyst firms, this report draws solely from these real world experts: practitioners who actively use enterprise technology on a regular basis to achieve their goals. The ratings in this report were collected during hundreds of structured 1-on-1 interviews with practitioners at companies generating at least $10M in revenue across industries like retail, media, CPG, Financial Services, and more.

In our in-depth interviews, brands tell us which vendors they are using as CDPs and how they are using them, which we categorize by use case. This report provides an aggregate overview of those interviews, which live in the Alium platform. Our research finds that practitioners use a wider variety of technology than the vendor platforms traditionally referred to as "CDP."

This Report Comprises:
Interviewee ratings based on product, people, processes and price, resulting in The Alium Satisfaction score scaled 1 - 10.

Scores shown in this report are derived only from the relevant brand interviews based on the "CDP" use case.

Vendors listed in the graphic were named by at least two different brands as their "CDP" with additional vendors listed below.