A year in review: The Buy with Prime editorial program

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1.   Editorial overview

Purpose

With nearly a year under our belt, the purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the editorial program, and help you understand how our editorial engine is helping to drive the business. The desired outcome is alignment on our content strategy for editorial programming, and provide clarity on content investments to raise the bar in 2024.

Editorial program snapshot

As the centerpiece of our editorial strategy, the Springboard blog is the publishing hub for driving discovery through search, social, email and other distribution channels. Using a mix of thought leadership, merchant stories, partner spotlights and product updates, the blog helps **drive demand** for Buy with Prime. The program is fueled by insights from merchant experience, voice of the customer, shopper experience, and SEO research, and brought to life by tapping the expert perspectives of 100+ internal and external SMEs.

Goals

The goal of our editorial program is to create a search-optimized, self-service destination where merchants, partners and shoppers can learn about and share the benefits of Buy with Prime. Quantifiably, our goals are to use the blog to raise brand awareness (the blog accounts for **20% of total website UVs**), turn prospects into leads (influenced **1700+ signup clicks**; 6% of total website signup clicks), increase unique visitors (**30% monthly growth**; 97k by EOY 2023), and grow natural search traffic (**20% average growth** since January).

Audience

The primary audience is **prospective merchants** across cohorts. Secondarily, our content serves as a learning vehicle for existing merchants and partners. We're collaborating with the Sales, Demand Gen, and Shopper teams to identify opportunities to engage enterprises/vendors and shoppers with our editorial programming. To help create customized content for audience personas, our collaboration with research teams across Santos is ongoing.

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2.   2023 blog performance

In addition to creating a creating a resource that's responsible for **20%** of total website UVs and **6%** of total signup clicks*, we've seen some additional business benefits such as:

- Using the blog as a source for engaging and converting prospects (example: 25% conversion lift)
- Supporting cross-channel marketing initiatives such as paid search, email/newsletters, and social media
- Providing a testing ground for SEO-focused content and product narratives
- Enhancing visibility for Buy with Prime merchants and partners via spotlight articles

*See Appendix 1 for more details on editorial accomplishments

5 Highlights
1. Tracking positive to our goals
   - Input: Engaged 75 of 90 SMEs* | Published average of 10 articles/month
   - Output: Attracted 72k of 96k of UVs | Influenced 1700 of 2400 sign up clicks
2. Paid search traffic to the blog converts
   - 76% of blog views in 2023 came from four articles (4% of all posts) supported by paid search
   - Paid search traffic to the blog drove 78% of all sign up clicks and 86% of sign up form completions
3. Success stories are resonating
   - Of the 40 merchant and partner stories/case studies published five accounted for 15% of UVs
4. Insight-driven content drives sign ups

51   • Research-backed articles drove 73% of sign up clicks (of the top 20 blogs influencing clicks)
52   5. Streamlined the review/approval process
53   • Calibrated with legal team and moved to a retroactive review in Summer 2023
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55   *See full list of contributors here (see tab SME database)*
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57 **5 Misses**
58   1. Partnerships with PMM and Sales to create content targeted at specific audience personas was sporadic
59   • Opportunity: better align with Sales and PMM to enhance audience-specific content
60   2. A slow start for the Leadership. Editorial. Narrative. Series (LENS) thought leadership program
61   • Opportunity: Engage more Sr. Leaders in our editorial programming (Peter Larson is on board!)
62   3. Content attribution is still elusive
63   • Opportunity: Continue working with Sean Townshend to use UTM parameters to attribute end actions
64   back to specific blogs
65   4. Growing and tracking newsletter subscribers got off to a slow start
66   • Opportunity: Merchandize newsletter CTA on more distribution channels and improve monthly
67   tracking of subscriber growth
68   5. Blog redesign was deprioritized
69   • Opportunity: Leverage Project Refresh to upgrade the UX on the blog
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71 In 2024, we'll tap into what worked well and pursue tactics to addressed missed opportunities with bar-raising
72 initiatives.
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3. Raising the bar in 2024

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75 We've identified some valuable lessons that will inform our editorial approach in 2024. These include:
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77   • Paid search is an effective driver of qualified traffic to the blog (*1.5k sign up clicks from 4 blogs*), but
78   relying on it for volume isn't sustainable
79   • Merchant stories, case studies and partner spotlights are important drivers of organic UVs (*26% of UVs*
80   *came from these series – excludes 56k UVs attributed to paid search for the 4 promoted blogs*)
81   • Data claims, best practices and tips engage readers (*6 of the top 20 blogs were from this series, accounting*
82   *for 68% of UVs – excludes 56k UVs attributed to paid search for the 4 promoted blogs*)
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84 We've also learned what types of topics resonate most with blog visitors*. The table below breaks down of the
85 topic clusters that drove the most UVs on the blog between October 2022-September 18 2023.
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Topic focus	UVs	% of blog total
MCF/Fulfillment**	38,786	50%
Thought Leadership***	20,208	26%
SEO-driven***	7,816	10%
Product	7,151	9%
Merchant	4,741	6%
Partner	2,013	3%

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88   *Check out the Monthly Reporting Quip (see tab Blog topic breakdown)*
89   ***Includes the top performing blog of the year that served as a landing page for paid search (accounted for 49% of total blog UVs)*
90   ****Includes the three other blogs that were supported by paid search (collectively accounted for 33% of total blog UVs)*
91   *See Appendix 2 for details about our content series, publishing strategy and distribution.*
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93 Based on these learnings and new opportunities for growth, below are tactics we'll continue to improve, new
94 tactics to raise the bar and tactics that we'll discontinue.
95

Tactics to improve*

- Right-size channel mix of traffic to the blog to better align with industry benchmarks, specifically natural search ([source](#))
    - <u>Actions</u>: Increase SEO-driven topics to grow natural search traffic | Improve consistency in showcasing blogs on social media | Experiment with long-form content to attract search crawlers
- Prioritize and increase usage of infographics, visuals and videos to make blogs more compelling
    - <u>Actions</u>: Ensure at least 50% of blogs include product imagery from Santos, merchants, partners | Publish three infographics per quarter
- Strengthen brand thought leadership by engaging senior leaders to support the LENS program
    - <u>Actions</u>: Publish two thought leadership articles from two L7+ leaders per quarter
- Publish and publish co-created content with Amazon O&O partners around topics that resonate
    - <u>Actions</u>: Improve editorial planning with MCF content team to push at least one article per month around the "better together" story | Co-create three articles per quarter Seller Central, Prime, Pay, and About content teams
- Repurpose and refresh top performing blogs to support product updates and SEO efforts
    - <u>Actions</u>: Institute a quarterly audit of articles to identify blogs to refresh with new product information and trending SEO keywords/queries | Create content that talks directly to specific audience archetypes/personas

    **See [Appendix 3](#) for additional details on areas for improvement and associated actions

Tactics to raise the bar

- Experiment with pillar (long-form) content to increase exposure with search algorithms
    - <u>Actions</u>: Align with Marketing, PMM and Brand teams on quarterly themes relating to growth, fulfillment/operations, and UX/marketing and build topic clusters to support integrated campaigns | Conduct keyword research to optimize thematic content for search
- Leverage the value of the blog (20% of total web UVs) to secure paid promotion budget
    - <u>Actions</u>: Identify existing/build new blogs that can serve as landing pages for paid search | Partner with PMM team create articles purpose-built to support paid promotion
- Strengthen brand authority by externalizing in-house research (M'Pulse/VOM/SXO)
    - <u>Actions</u>: Partner with research teams to identify ways to anonymize data to public consumption | Build data-centric infographics to integrate into the blogs | Explore research-focused webinar with partner and merchant to showcase the insights
- Invest in UTM attribution tracking for editorial assets distributed across channels
    - <u>Actions</u>: Align with Sean Townshend to define UTM naming conventions | Implement UTM parameters on blogs included in emails, newsletters, social | Establish the mechanisms to track end actions post click from Buy with Prime digital properties
- Merchandise topical blogs on relevant web pages to drive exposure
    - <u>Actions</u>: Work with web team to add a page component to show three blogs at the bottom of web pages (e.g., marketing best practice blogs on Marketing toolkit page) | Automate the process for updating blogs on targeted web pages to keep the content fresh

    See [Appendix 4](#) for additional details on tactics we'll continue and tactics to raise the bar.

Tactics to discontinue

Based on the lessons learned, coupled with the insights captured from performance data and the realities of resourcing, we've identified four editorial tactics that we'll discontinue, including:

- Publishing [product-focused merchant shopping guides](#) for every observance (e.g., valentine's day)

146   o   <u>Instead</u>: We'll prioritize those that drive unit sales around specific industry events such as Prime
147   Day, Black Friday, Back to School, and partner with the Shopper team to revamp and publish
148   shopping.
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150 • Creating blogs for every new feature release
151   o   <u>Instead</u>: We'll look at the data and determine the best way to incorporate tier 2 and 3 products
152   into editorial content (e.g., roundups or additions to relevant articles).
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154 • Letting underperforming or out-of-date blogs linger
155   o   <u>Instead</u>: We'll establish a UV/BR/Time on page metric that we'll use to conduct quarterly audits
156   and pull down underperforming or dated content and find ways to repurpose it.
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158 • Being reactive to EVERY request for building blogs
159   o   <u>Instead</u>: We'll set/socialize the bar for blogs, and determine how new requests fit into our
160   editorial strategy and roadmap.
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4.   2024 success measures

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163 We'll use the learnings and bar-raising tactics to make some bold bets for growing the Springboard blog in 2024.
164 Below are draft KPIs for the editorial program in 2024 based on H1 2023 baseline data. We'll revisit these baselines
165 at the end of the year and revised the goals accordingly. These are simply meant to provide a potential view for
166 growth.
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All blog channels
169 • Grow monthly UVs by 15%, from an FY 2023 goal of 97,000 to a FY 2024 goal of 213,547 (116k lift)
170   o   UVs are a measure of brand awareness and interest
171 • Increase signup clicks by 12%, from FY 2023 goal of 2,400 to a FY 2024 goal of 3,600 (1200 lift)
172   o   Signup clicks are a signal of intent
173 • (New) Drive 700 signup form completions in FY 2024, growing monthly completions by 15%
174   o   Form completions are opportunities to turn prospects into customers
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Organic search channel
177 • (New) Increase monthly UVs by 10%, resulting in an incremental increase of 2,300 by EOY 2024
178 • (New) Increase monthly signup clicks by 15%, resulting in an attributable 1,200 clicks by EOY 2024
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186   **Appendix 1**
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188   **Accomplishments**
189   Since formally launching in October 2022, we've not only established an effective editorial program, but we've also
190   achieved some key milestones. From October 2022 through August 2023, some of our key successes include:
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192   • Published **120+** articles, averaging 10 per month. Top performers include:, What to expect from BwP
193   customer service, 4 ways to elevate your marketing using BwP, BwP increases shopper conversion
194   • See Appendix 1 for breakdown of high and low performing editorial content
195   • Collaborated with **70+** internal and external SMEs*. Some key contributors include: Reece Dano, Adrian
196   Bell, Doug Herrington, Valerie Clift, Jenn Brisebois (Klaviyo) and Eric Yonge (EYStudios)
197   • Attracted **67k** unique visitors (UVs) at a 22% CAGR
198   • Influenced sign ups via clicks from blogs resulting in more than **1700** MALs
199   • Showcased **40** merchants and partners in spotlights, guides, and case studies. Highlights include: Epic
200   Water Filters, Sunday Morning Coffee Company, BEING, Wyze.
201   • Used **4 articles** for paid search demand gen initiatives, accounting for **49k** of blog UVs (75% of UVs in H1).
202   Articles include: BwP can take the headache out of fulfillment, BwP 101 for Shopify merchants, Is your
203   checkout working for your customers?, and 8 ways to optimize your site in 2023.
204   • Partnered with This is Small Business podcast to showcase a BwP merchant (Livie & Luca)
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207   **Appendix 2**
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209   **Content series**
210   The table below offers a brief description of the types, value, and associated business focus for our editorial
211   content we publish on the blog and syndicate across channels. Items in red are envisioned, but not yet kicked off
212   with stakeholders.
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Content type	Description	Value	Business focus
Product Series	Content showcasing unique value that Buy with Prime can bring to merchants' ecommerce business, specifically relating to conversions and logistical savings	Establishes Buy with Prime solutions and contributing SMEs as authorities helping drive merchant success.	Lead generation + deeper usage of Buy with Prime solutions
Merchant stories & spotlights	Articles and videos showcasing unique merchant experiences, journeys and success stories of using Buy with Prime to grow their ecommerce business.	Drives believability and relatability, humanizes the brand, inspires merchants, fosters engagement.	Lead generation + brand building.
Thought leadership series	Opinion pieces and Q&As with internal leaders (LENS) and external experts. Can include a mix of bespoke POVs from leaders, as well as gated ebooks, research, and white papers.	Adds credence and authority to the Buy with Prime narrative.	Brand awareness + lead generation
SEO series	Topics that are driven by trending search queries and keywords relating to an array of ecommerce topics and mapped to known merchant/shopper pain points derived from research.	Brand exposure, increase domain authority, and ownership of page 1 Google search results	Lead generation + brand building
Case studies	Problem + solution + results templatized overview of merchant experience with Buy with Prime.	Drives believability and relatability, humanizes the brand by inspiring	Lead generation + deeper product usage

		prospects and existing merchants	
Partner Series	Content that captures insights and guidance from agency partners and 3P developers based on their experience of working with and/or helping merchants use Buy with Prime.	Offers objective and trustworthy perspectives.	Lead generation + brand authority
Guest posts	Content sourced from Amazon business partners (APay), external business partners, and industry influencers.	Drives believability and trust in the brand.	Brand building + lead generation
Shopper Series	Curated trends about shopper behaviors and shopper quotes about their experience using Buy with Prime.	Drives bottoms-up demand for wider adoption of Buy with Prime	Lead generation + usage
From the field (Sales)	Contributions from front-line sales outlining useful insights, tips and learnings from their experience working with merchants using Buy with Prime.	Helps to educate merchants with authentic insights and drives brand awareness.	Lead generation + product usage + retention
Roundups	Articles that compile a list of new merchants offering Buy with Prime products on their site (merchant brand logo, brief descriptor of product(s) and links). Can include gift guides and shopping guides.	Showcases Buy with Prime merchants and drives believability in the product.	Brand building + product usage + lead generation

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216 **Publishing strategy**
217 To align with our general content marketing strategy, we'll prioritize content across five categories.[1]
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219 • <u>Thought leadership</u>: Showcase industry expertise to establish brand authority and give merchants the tools to
220   succeed.
221 • <u>Storytelling</u>: Use anecdotes and success stories to inspire and engage merchants and shoppers.
222 • <u>Search-driven</u>: Use trending keywords and queries to build targeted articles and inform all editorial content.
223 • <u>Educational</u>: Help merchants, partners and shoppers understand the value proposition and features of Buy
224   with Prime.
225 • <u>Trends, seasonal and observances</u>: Publish timely and relevant assets that tap into cultural and industry trends.
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227 Additionally, our editorial program services two core types of content – planned and ad hoc.
228 • <u>Planned content</u>: Content that has a minimum of 30-day lead time, near final messaging guide, topics that are
229   informed by MXO, SXO, SEO, and other research insights, can include topics proposed by internal or external
230   (partner) stakeholders, includes the contributions of subject matter experts, and can be informed by T1
231   product feature GTM campaigns or announcements. Formats can include blogs, web page copy, infographics,
232   video or audio assets, ebooks, papers, research reports.
233 • <u>Ad hoc content</u>: Content that is submitted by Santos or other Amazon stakeholders via the Asana Editorial
234   Request form. These ad hoc requests are triaged in Asana and pursued based on topic relevancy to merchant

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[1] Definitions/resources: Educational content, thought leadership, storytelling, search-driven.

235   pain points and impact to the business. Topics can include major announcements (e.g., BwP is GA), data points
236   (e.g., 25% average conversion), or major brand changes (e.g., BwP and MCF better together). Ad hoc content
237   does not include content pertaining to 'how to' narratives – these will be funneled to Knowledge Center,
238   evolving products that don't have the blessing of the PMM team, and quick-turn requests relating to moment-
239   in-time events like conference attendance. Once ad hoc editorial requests are accepted, they are incorporated
240   into the process flow alongside planned content.

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242   The Buy with Prime blog will be the central repository for our editorial content, and articles will be syndicated in
243   newsletters, on web pages, across social channels, and other distribution channels (see table below). Based on six-
244   months of data, we've found that publishing 2-3 articles per week is both feasible with our available resources and
245   has proven to be an effective cadence to achieving our goal of 10% increase in unique visitors each month.
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247   **Distribution network**
248   Editorial distribution network and estimated cadence for driving exposure across channels.
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Channel	Platform	Cadence (est)	Audience focus
Blog	AEM	~12 articles/monthly	Merchants/partners/shoppers
Merchant newsletter	Salesforce/Pardot	5 articles/monthly	Prospects/Merchants
Onboarding email (CTA -> Blog)	Salesforce/Pardot	Ongoing	Merchants
Shopper newsletter	Salesforce/Pardot	2-3 articles/monthly	Shoppers
Social	Facebook & Instagram	4-5 articles/monthly	Shoppers/influencers
Social	LinkedIn	5-7 articles/monthly	Merchants/influencers
Web (product pages)	AEM	Ongoing	Merchants/partners/shoppers
MC marketing widget	Merchant console	1-2 articles/monthly	Merchants
Amazon partners (O&O channels)	Various	TBD	Merchants/partners/shoppers
Webinars (CTA -> blog)	TBD	Ongoing	Merchants/partners
Virtual events (CTA -> blog)	Various	Ongoing	Merchants/partners
Influencers (sharing)	Social media	Ongoing	Merchants/partners/shoppers
Partners/agencies (sharing)	Social media/blogs	Ongoing	Merchants/shoppers

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251   **Appendix 3**

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Area for improvement	Actions
Improve channel mix of traffic to the blog to be more aligned with industry benchmarks (source) Status Natural search benchmark = 17%/ Blog = 7%; Social benchmark = 16%/ Blog = 6%; Email benchmark = 14%/ Blog = 1%	• Prioritize SEO-driven content to increase search exposure • Experiment with themes/pillar content/topic clusters to attract search algorithms • Be consistent with surfacing blog content in LinkedIn newsletters + other social channels • Institute a quarterly subscriber survey in newsletters to identify content opportunities
Grow natural search traffic, which is lagging, but increasing Status	• Prioritize SEO-driven content to increase search exposure • Experiment with themes/pillar content/topic clusters to attract search algorithms

First 6 months natural search traffic averaged 360 UVs per month; last 3 months that average is 584 UVs per month (62% increase)	
Up the ante on using infographics and visuals in blogs Status Only published 2 infographics with articles since January 2023	• Leverage internal research to create data-centric infographics – targeting 2x/month • Incorporate more product/feature imagery in blog body copy
Explore ways to improve underperforming shopping spotlights Status Only 3 of the 10 product-focused shopping posts pulled more than 200 UVs (for any single post)	• Partner with shopper team to create and publish BwP merchant spotlights on the shopper section of the blog + use UTM codes to track clicks/unit sales • Prioritize distributing BwP merchant spotlights on consumer social media (Insta, TikTok, Facebook)
Improve optics into attributing specific editorial content to end actions that drive the business Status Without ref tags/UTM parameters, we are unable to get a holistic view of downstream engagements across platforms (e.g., Pardot, partner sites, AMZN partner blogs)	• Partner with Sean Townshend to implement UTM codes on blogs with links to end actions such as signups, event registrations • Incorporate UTM codes on blogs distributed across channels to track attribution
Co-create and distribute more editorial content with key AMZN O&O partners (e.g., Pay, About) Status Of the more than 100 articles published, only 7 were either co-created or referenced AMZN business partners with limited x-channel distribution	• Partner with Seller Central content team to co-create/distribute blogs/ebooks • Strengthen/build relationships with Prime, Pay and About content teams to co-create/distribute content

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254 **Appendix 4**
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Tactics to continue	Tactics to raise the bar
Repurpose and refresh top performing blogs to support product updates and our SEO topic clusters	Experiment and optimize our content roadmap around themes/topic clusters that map to merchant pain points, Santos business goals and SEO trends
Experiment with publishing 1-2 pieces of long-form content (>2,000 words) per month to improve SERP rankings and strengthen brand awareness	Normalize SEO-focused content across all digital properties, including the content strategy for Project refresh (both merchant and shopper sections)
Identify new, high-performing articles to serve as landing pages for paid search initiatives	Leverage value of blog to legitimize expansion of paid promotion budget across search and social channels
Expand bench of internal/external contributors to 100+, prioritize the LENS program, and encourage social sharing among key stakeholders	Explore ways to partner with social influencers to co-create and distribute content to drive shopper adoption
Showcase best content in monthly emails/LinkedIn newsletters, lifecycle emails and organic social posts	Externalize internal research (M'Pulse) and sanction more external research to strengthen brand authority
Expand partnership with This is Small Business podcast team + with PR to tap into relevant external podcasts to showcase Santos leaders and BwP merchants.	Extend and formalize co-creation/co-marketing content programs with key business partners (MCF, Pay, Prime, About) in coordination with Tabhish's team.

Double down with placement and format (in body copy and buttons/text links) of signups in editorial content	Pressure test our cadence of publishing 10 blogs per month – optimizing around the "less is more mentality"
Use engagement metrics across distribution channels to inform content create and distribution strategies	Establish mechanisms to use UTM parameters that allow us to attribute downstream impact (e.g., signups, unit sales) to editorial content
Extend usage of merchant and shopper archetypes/ personas to improve resonance of targeted content	Pilot 1:many personalized experiences using Adobe Target across blog and BwP website to drive deeper engagement and increase return visits

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